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Philip Worthy



By

William DeBet



PHILIP WORTHY

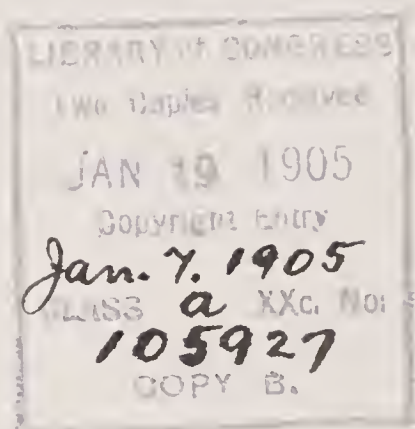
BY

WILLIAM DEBET

Author of "ELDER TRUE RECALLED"

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PREFACE.

That there is manifest injustice among our brethren, I presume that no one will deny; but as to who is responsible for this injustice, I presume there has always been a great variety of opinions hitherto. But henceforth there will be no parties to the controversy; for now the question is forever settled, as in this book every one has had an opportunity to speak for himself and has delivered himself fully. True, at times some of the speakers were just a trifle reluctant about expressing themselves; for as love letters sound and read better in private, so some of the speakers in this book had very many things which they thought would sound a great deal better in private caucuses and committee rooms than they would in public. However, the design of this book was to, if possible, bring such pressure to bear upon them as would compel them to speak forth in the clearest and most unmistakable language all those things which they have only acted hitherto.

Feeling that no one has been misrepresented, that all have had an opportunity, and that justice has been done by all, we send this book forth, with the hope that it will encourage those who are right to go on in the right way and discourage those who are in the wrong and turn them from the wrong way.

THE AUTHOR.

PHILIP WORTHY.

CHAPTER I.

Philip Worthy was born on January 1, 18—, in the small village of Conway. This village was very unattractive, situated, as it was, in the midst of some not very fertile hills. There being no large cities near and having but little communication with distant cities, the facilities for the education of the people of this village were meager. They were all poor and “backwoodsy,” in all that the ordinary acceptation of that term implies. But, as is frequently true in such communities, many were very religious. They had one or more great revival meetings every year, when many were converted. Philip’s parents had gone to the anxious seat and had been converted when they were in their teens; and Philip’s ears were accustomed to their voices in the reading of the Scriptures, in prayer, and in the relating of their wonderful experiences in conversion. They had only three months’ school in the year, and Philip’s extreme poverty would never permit him to attend more than half the term; but, because of his industry and native ability, he would advance as much in the short time that he attended as many would in the entire term. They never had more than two or three books, one of which was the Bible, to take to school in those days. Hence the Bible naturally became his main study at school, and especially at home. After having read the New Testament through several times, he became interested in his own

salvation very early—when he was about twelve years of age—and so expressed himself to his parents, who told him to go to the anxious seat at the very next opportunity, when he could pray, and they would all pray with and for him, that peradventure God would bless him in the pardon of his sins. He told them that he had read the New Testament through, and it said nothing about the anxious seat, and that he was afraid to do anything that the Bible did not tell him to do. They tried for several years to reconcile him; but the more he read the Bible, the less inclined he was toward anything that was not written.

When he was sixteen years of age, Philip told the preacher that he wanted to be baptized upon the simple confession of his faith.

The minister said: “I have been in this charge for many years, and I remember distinctly to have sprinkled you in infancy with my own hands.”

Philip answered: “But the Bible nowhere commands either sprinkling or infant baptism.” He continued: “I love you, my parents, and everybody; but I fear God, tremble at his word, and am afraid to add to or take from the word of God.”

When Philip was twenty-one years of age, he was acknowledged to be the best-informed man in the Scriptures in the entire community, not even the minister excepted. He applied to the ministers of the different churches in the community for baptism upon the simple confession of his faith in Christ; but they all refused, on the ground that it was contrary to the rules of their churches. His knowledge of the Bible had by this time become proverbial; so that while he was kind, gentle, and not at all inclined to controversy or fault-finding, yet his presence at a meeting would, in a meas-

ure, destroy the enthusiasm; for acknowledging his superior knowledge of the Bible and seeing his honest fear to go beyond "that which is written" for anything, the bare thought of the possibility of the people's being wrong in some things, and hence the necessity of making some changes, was beginning to dawn upon some of them.

Some time within the next year an Elder Booker, of what they had always heard called the "Campbellite Church," came to the town and asked permission to preach in the church-house; but they said: "No; the Campbellites are following a poor, weak, fallible, mortal man, instead of Jesus Christ; teach baptismal regeneration; deny the operation, if not the existence, of the Holy Spirit; and they are a dangerous people."

Elder Booker then rented a store building, and many went out to hear him the first night. His text was 2 Tim. 4: 1, 2: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The minister said: "We are misrepresented in almost everything—indeed, as advocating and doing exactly the opposite of what we believe. For instance, we are represented as wearing the name of a man; but we do not only refuse to wear a human name ourselves, but we insist upon it that it is wrong for any church to do so. What is true of the name is true of everything else. We plead for the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, as our exclusive rule of faith and practice—that where the Bible speaks, we will speak; and where the Bible is silent, we will be silent."

This was exactly that for which Philip Worthy had been

contending for years; and he had, in a measure, persuaded many others now present to believe as he did. So while Elder Booker was contending for the unity of all God's people upon the Bible alone, Philip resolved not only to respond to the invitation that day, but to spend his entire life contending for the same thing. When the invitation was extended, he and many others responded, one of the number being James Fairplay, who had loved Philip as a playmate in school and now as a young man; and while he had never expressed himself even to Philip, still he believed as Philip did, and had always honored him for his honesty, modesty, and devotion to the word of God.

As soon as Philip became a Christian, he at once began to think how he might thoroughly qualify himself to preach the gospel to any audience in the United States; for he did not want to be a respecter of persons, and he realized that the rich and cultured needed to hear and obey the gospel as much as the poor and illiterate. He also realized that education would be no disadvantage to him among the illiterate, while illiteracy would be an untold disadvantage to him among the educated. He believed, too, that while he was acquiring a finished education in the universities of the country, he would have many opportunities of teaching the Bible by precept and example.

James Fairplay, knowing Philip's desire for an education, now became more interested in him than ever. He knew that it was three hundred miles to the nearest university; and as this happened to be one of the best schools in the country, he knew that Philip would naturally feel inclined toward that institution; but knowing his extreme poverty, the great question with James Fairplay was as to how he could surmount the difficulties. He noticed that Philip was

not missing a day, or even a part of a day, from his work, for which he was receiving very small wages.

By and by James Fairplay saw Philip making preparations to leave home. Supposing, of course, that Philip was going where he could get better wages for his work, James asked him just where he was going to work, how much better wages he would get, and how many years he thought he would have to work in order to have money enough to attend college a term or two.

"Why, I am getting ready to start to college now," said Philip.

"Now?" asked James.

"Yes," said Philip; "I will start to-day."

"But," said James, "have you much money?"

"No," said Philip, "I have a very small amount; but I expect to walk to college, and will try to get some work on the way. If I can't get work, I have money enough to pay for food and lodging till I get there, and I think some provision is made in connection with the institution for those who desire to work."

James said nothing, sympathized with Philip, admired him as never before, and resolved to watch his career. When he went home, he told his folks that Philip Worthy would shake the continent if nothing happened.

The same day at noon Philip bade his parents, brothers, sisters, and friends good-by; and, with a small bundle in his hand, he started on his long journey on foot, with barely money enough to meet his expenses, even traveling in that way. As he had inherited a strong physique and had formed no bad habits, though he was not at all accustomed to walking such a long distance, in eight days he appeared upon the college campus, which was almost forty miles per day. He

reached his destination a few days before commencement day. He went to the president of the college at once and told him his financial condition and his object in coming. The president, who had been connected with college work for a great many years, never looked into the face of one whom he admired more. As he looked upon Philip's strong and manly form and face—not at all embarrassed, but exceedingly humble—he could not help predicting a bright future for him. So he told him that the school term would close in a few days; that he thought that he had better attend the commencement exercises if he could, but in the meantime he might look around and secure some employment for the summer.

While Philip was not impulsive and excitable, looking at everything in a businesslike way, never thinking of such a thing as fail, yet the kind look and friendly words of the president encouraged him. He went out, and the same day secured employment on the State farm, in connection with the university, at larger wages than he had ever received before. He worked till commencement day, and enjoyed the exercises on that day very much. It was all different from anything that he had ever seen, but concerning which he had read much, having received a catalogue of the work of the university and examined it thoroughly.

Philip discharged his duties on the farm so faithfully that when he told the foreman that he would have to quit, he was offered a special position at much higher wages.

Philip said: "I am now twenty-one years of age; and if I ever expect to get an education, I will have to enter the university now; but I will have to work mornings, evenings, and Saturdays in order to meet my expenses, and would like employment here."

“Most certainly,” said the foreman. “If I ever need just one man and you want to work, no other man need apply.”

Philip took the little money he had earned, paid his room rent and tuition, bought some books and clothing, and entered upon his school work proper. He never volunteered to give a recitation; but in every instance when he was called upon he would show such originality and such a thorough grasp of not only the question, but of the subject of which the question was a part, that it was but a short time till the students and teachers would naturally turn to him with their difficult questions and problems.

When Saturday came, frequently the foreman on the farm would come to Philip's room by daylight to see whether he wanted work before others could ask for it, for he said: “You do such good work and are so reliable that, instead of my having to look after you to keep you at work, and then having to do some of your work over, your good example over those with whom you work inspires them to do good work.”

When the Lord's day came, Philip was always in his place at the Bible school—the same modest, but thoughtful, gentleman that he always was. His superior knowledge of the Scriptures astonished the class and teacher from the beginning, and he was soon recognized by the entire church as almost authority on difficult passages of scripture.

Before the first year expired, Elder Venerable said to Philip: “I am getting old, and my church work is becoming too heavy for me. I am trying to do the work here and preach for our mission of fifty members away out on —— street. Now, could you not relieve me of the work of the mission? Could you not go and teach them the Scriptures morning and evening, break bread with them, and attend their prayer meetings?”

“My purpose is, and has been for some time, to make Bible teaching my life work,” said Philip; “and if I thought that I could do the work of the mission, I would like to undertake it.”

“I know that you can do the work,” said Elder Venerable; and he proceeded to make the announcement accordingly.

The people of the mission were delighted, for they had seen him and heard him and had learned to think a great deal of him. While the compensation was necessarily small, yet from the first it was sufficient to meet his expenses in the university, for he was naturally economical.

Philip continued his work in the university for four years, led all his classes, was valedictorian, and received two diplomas. During the time the mission church had grown from fifty to two hundred members, had a good house, was out of debt, and absolute harmony prevailed.

Before Philip left for another course of study in a more Eastern college, the university gave him a reception, at which the president of the college, some of the professors, and the presidents of the various societies made short addresses. The church also gave him a reception, at which Elder Venerable and many others expressed their very high appreciation of the wonderful work that Philip did while there; and the city papers gave him lengthy “write ups,” all predicting for him a bright future. There never was a man better prepared to enter upon a second college course. He was thorough in what he had gone over, and was greatly encouraged by the commendation that the entire city had given him when he left.

One of the quite strong churches in the city to which he was going was without a minister just at that time, and, hearing of his coming, made a provisional appointment for

him for the first Lord's day that he was to be there. When he arrived and was told of the appointment, he was very much pleased. He said: "The church work is my meat and my drink. My college work is simply preparatory to increasing my efficiency in church work."

If possible, Philip made a brighter record in this university than in the first one; for he was older, knew more, and entered with quite a prestige. He preached with great acceptance to the church to which he was called during his entire three-years' course. In addition to his school and church work, he occupied the chair of English literature, as a member of the faculty, during the last year. At that time he was receiving eight hundred dollars a year for his preaching and six hundred dollars a year for his teaching.

Graduating with the highest honors at that celebrated institution, to complete his preparation for the ministry he then prepared to spend two years at —— Bible College. It was with great reluctance that the church at —— gave him up, but for the sake of further preparation for his life work it finally consented.

Through his past record, Philip was called to the chair of mental philosophy in the university of which the Bible department was a part, at a salary of one thousand dollars a year; and soon after entering the college he was called to minister to a church, for which he received one thousand dollars a year.

Notwithstanding the great load that he was now carrying, which was a marvel to all who knew him, yet it seemed to him to be no burden, but a great pleasure. The expressions of satisfaction and gratitude necessarily lightened his work.

CHAPTER II.

Toward the close of his work at —— Bible College, Philip selected a life companion in the person of Miss Lovejoy, with whom he had been acquainted for three years, and who was bright, intelligent, scholarly, and as devoted to the cause of Christ as himself.

At the expiration of three years, against the protests of the church, college, and community, Philip resolved to locate at the large and beautiful town of Outway for his future home, where he expected to work and whence he expected to go out, far and near, to preach the gospel. There was no church of Christ at Outway when he located there, but the first thing that he did was to hold a great tent meeting. His audiences were small at first, but increased slowly from the first and very rapidly toward the last. His audiences were small at first because comparatively few knew of his coming; those who did know of it knew him as a "Campbellite," and were so prejudiced against him that they went only through curiosity. But his sincere face and honest and able Bible teachings greatly disarmed them; so that they all went away, saying: "We have been misinformed concerning these people, and are determined to hear more of them, and shall bring our friends to hear this preacher."

On the second evening of the meeting the audience was almost twice as large as the first one. Philip Worthy said: "I want to teach nothing but the Bible, and you will do me a great kindness if you will ask me any questions you may desire."

A Rev. (?) Spout, pastor of the —— Church, arose and said: “Why do you call yourselves ‘Campbellites?’”

“We do not,” answered Philip.

“Yes,” said Spout; “but you belong to the Campbellite Church, do you not?”

“No,” said Worthy; “I do not.”

“Then to what church do you belong?” asked Spout.

“I belong to the church of Christ,” answered Philip.

“But when was your church founded, and by whom?” said Spout.

“I have no church myself, but belong to the church of Christ, which was founded on the first Pentecost after the Savior’s resurrection by Christ and through the apostles,” said Philip.

“But,” said Spout, “how is it possible to enter that church now?”

“The way we understand it is this,” said Philip: “At that time sinners asked what they were to do to be saved, and their question is recorded in the New Testament. The apostles answered that question, and their answer also is recorded in the New Testament. Now we think that if people ask the same question to-day and comply with the same answer that they did, it will make them members of the same church to-day that it made them members of then.”

Philip’s explanation was so reasonable that all present, except the preacher, believed it; and even he held his peace.

Philip continued to preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in such a simple, honest, yet scholarly, way that however critical or pugnacious one might be when he first came, he would go away disarmed. People would go away saying: “Well, that man certainly is right; but if he

is right, we are all wrong, at least in some things, and our good parents who are dead and gone died in error.

Rev. (?) Spout said: "If that Campbellite preacher is right, then our dear, good, religious fathers and mothers are dead and in hell."

So old Sister Devotion, of —— Church, went to Philip Worthy and said: "It seems to me that you are exactly right—that you teach nothing but the Scriptures; but if you are right, does it follow that our parents and others who died believing differently are lost? Brother Spout says it does."

"No, indeed," said Philip. "Your parents, many of them, lived up to the light that they had. They did not understand all, because the teachers either did not understand themselves or, through lack of reverence for the authority of God's word, did not teach the whole truth. If your parents were living to-day and were honest and should understand as you do now, they, no doubt, would change. God requires all to be honest; and for your parents to have taught and practiced what they did not believe would have been dishonest, and to have saved them would have been to save them in their dishonesty."

"That is so reasonable and satisfactory," she said. "Won't you make that explanation from the pulpit? So many need to hear it."

"I most certainly will," said Philip.

The next time that Philip appeared in the pulpit he complied with the request, and thereby removed that which had been an apparently insurmountable difficulty. As a result, scores of those who had been affiliated with the various denominational bodies came forward, together with many who had never been identified with any church; and with this a revival wave started that soon resulted in a congregation with

a membership sufficient to build a good house of worship and support Philip Worthy as minister.

Philip continued to preach for this church till he educated and developed material for elders and deacons, when he organized the congregation and placed it under the instruction and oversight of the elders, while he took his tent and held meetings in different parts of the city. By the time he had established missions sufficiently strong to organize, there were one or two of the first congregation who had become so intensely interested that they wanted to spend their lives teaching the word; but it being necessary for them to make some special preparation, they said to Philip: "If you will teach us, we will greatly prefer it to going off to school." At once he organized a class, to whom he gave special Bible instruction daily.

CHAPTER III.

The ministerial association was about to meet at Conway, Philip's home town; and James Fairplay, who was delighted beyond measure over the brilliant record that his friend and brother, Philip, had made, thought that now was the time for them to hear him. So he hurried off to the programme committee and suggested that they put Philip's name on the programme, as they were all so anxious to hear him.

"Well, no," said John Dodger, chairman of the committee. "We have the programme already made out."

"But," said Fairplay, "did you not know that this is Philip's old home?"

"Yes," said Dodger; "we all knew it."

"Why, then, did you not put him on the programme?" asked Fairplay.

"Really, we did not happen to think of him. We will try to think of him next time," said Dodger.

"All right," said Fairplay. "We all want to hear him. We want to know where the ministers meet next time."

"They will meet at Prosperity," said Dodger.

James went away somewhat disappointed at Philip's not being on the programme this time, but elated at the thought of his being placed on it the next time, and mentioned the fact to all whom he met. So by the next meeting all who knew Philip had heard that he was to speak, and decided that, as it was only ten miles away, they would attend.

When the time came, nearly the whole community went

to Prosperity to hear Philip's great address or sermon. The great church in which the ministers met was filled almost to suffocation. Of course the ministers did not understand what it all meant. Even John Dodger did not understand it till he saw James Fairplay sitting back in the audience, with as bright and expectant a face as he had ever seen. Then it flashed upon him that they had all come to hear Philip Worthy. He then remembered having promised James Fairplay that the committee would think of Worthy the next time. He was almost paralyzed with apprehension; for he had had one conversation with Fairplay, and learned thereby that he not only wanted to see fair play in everything, but that he was of such a positive nature as to insist upon it, and that he would rebuke falsehood and error whenever and wherever he saw it, in public or private.

By and by some one from Conway brought a programme and handed it to James Fairplay, saying: "Philip's name is not on the programme at all."

James read it carefully and saw that the forenoon address was to be delivered by Samuel Greatman and that the afternoon address was to be delivered by Benjamin Newcome. Then Fairplay arose and said: "Mr. Chairman, I thought that Philip Worthy was to be on this programme, and we have all come to hear him; but I notice that his name is not on the programme at all."

"No," said Rev. (?) Sturdy, the chairman; "his name does not appear on the programme."

"Why not?" said Fairplay. "It was to have been on it."

"Well, I cannot say," said the chairman. "I did not know that he was to speak to-day. Besides, he never has been on any of our programmes."

"That is not to the credit of the association," said Fair-

play; "for there is not a wiser, better, or more able man in the brotherhood; and I want to know just why he is not to speak to-day."

Then John Dodger said: "I am chairman of the programme committee, and I did not understand that we were to put his name on the programme for to-day."

"When I went to you," said Fairplay, "and asked you to put him on the programme at Conway, his home town, you told me that you had the programme already made out; and I asked you if you did not know that that was his home town and that we were all so anxious to hear him. You told me that you would try to remember him the next time."

"Yes, but saying that we would *try to remember* him *next time* was not promising to put him on the programme," said Dodger. "There is quite a difference between trying to remember a thing and doing a thing."

"There is absolutely no difference with those who have any regard for their word," said Fairplay. "Did you not remember what you told me when you were making out the programme for to-day?"

"We did not," said Dodger; "but if we had, we would not have put his name on the programme."

"Why not?" asked Fairplay.

"Well, if you will know the truth, I will tell you," said Dodger. "I have tried to put you off the best I could; but you will not be put off, and now I am going to speak plainly. In the first place, we, as an association, do not look upon Philip Worthy as an able man—one who could speak to the edification of so able and honorable a body as this; in the second place, he is not in good standing with his brethren, for he never attends the preachers' meetings; in the third place, we do not consider him a safe Bible teacher."

“Then,” said Fairplay, “if these were your reasons, why did you not say so? Why did you keep me and all his friends in the dark? Why did you deceive us? You know that if you had said that at first, we would not have been here to-day. Now, with reference to the first charge—that is, that he is not an able man, one who is able to edify a body like this—I will say that you have never given him an opportunity. If you mean what you say, it is positive evidence that you know nothing about the man; for he took all the honors in all the colleges that he attended. Besides, he filled a professor’s chair in the second and third universities from which he graduated; preached, with great acceptance, to strong churches at these colleges; and built a mission church up to a strong, self-supporting congregation during his first college course. He not only pleased, but astonished, everybody with his native and acquired ability, with his original and superior knowledge of everything that he studied; and unless you are all a great deal more intelligent than you look and can speak a great deal better than I have heard you, I am certain that he could not only edify you, but instruct any of you for years.”

“There now!” exclaimed Dodger. “That’s enough, unless it were better. You need not be so personal.”

“Yes,” said Fairplay; “you think that it is too bad for me to talk to you to your faces, but that it is all right to talk about our good brother, Worthy, in his absence. Now, as to the second charge—that he is not in good standing with his brethren because he does not attend the ministerial association—I want to know what attending this association has to do with a man’s religious standing.”

“Well,” said Dodger, “that’s the decision of this association; and unless he attends these meetings, we have all de-

cided to never recognize him in any way. We will never put him on a programme of any kind whatever, will never call him to hold a meeting for us, will keep him out of the pulpits in our community, and, to the extent of our influence, will interfere with his work elsewhere."

"But," said Fairplay, "by what authority do you sit in judgment over your brother preachers?"

"We do not have to have authority," said Dodger.

"What?" said Fairplay. "Don't need any authority to put one of God's servants down, curtail and counterbalance his efforts, build up a false impression against him, and drive him from the field entirely if possible? In the name of all that is good and true, then, for what would you want authority? I have frequently wondered why Worthy and so many of our good brethren do not attend these meetings, but now I understand it all. It is simply because they are too conscientious to participate in some things that you do in these meetings. I have frequently heard of most uncalled-for and incredible decisions of this ministerial body—for instance, if you thought a preacher should be silenced from preaching, why, some preacher in good standing with the association would simply bring his case up before the next meeting of the ministers, and they would proceed at once to resolute and deal with him—but I never believed it till now."

"Well," said Dodger, "if the ministers don't do it, who will?"

"There is but one body on earth," said Fairplay, "which has any authority in the case—namely, the congregation of which he is a member. As to this preachers' association, as such, you have absolutely no authority for anything that you do. You are not even requested by any one to come to these meetings. You come together of your own accord, foot your

own bills, and arrange your own programmes. Then for you to arrogate to yourselves prerogatives that belong to the elders of the various congregations and to God himself is the most God-dishonoring and Heaven-defying thing that could be imagined. Your third charge is that Worthy is not a safe Bible teacher. Now, I defy any of you to mention a single feature of his teaching and practice that is not eminently scriptural."

"You know," said Dodger, "as well as I do, that Worthy has no organ or instrumental music of any kind whatever in his worship."

"Just so," said Fairplay; "but where is the chapter and verse in the New Testament that says we are to have instrumental music in the worship?"

"Of course the New Testament does not command it, but what harm is there in having it?" said Dodger.

"That is not the question," said Fairplay. "You have all turned your backs upon Worthy because you say that he is not a safe Bible teacher; and now, when you are pressed, you have to admit that the Bible nowhere commands instrumental music in the churches of Christ, but apparently in great surprise you ask: 'What harm is there in having it?' If you condemn him because he does not agree with you in matters of opinion, why do you not say so?"

"But," said Dodger, "you know that he has no Endeavor Society, Christian Woman's Board of Missions, Ladies' Aid, and not even a regular Sunday school, with Sunday-school literature—nothing but a Bible school."

"What of it?" asked Fairplay. "Do you mean that he is not a safe Bible teacher because the congregation of which he is a member and for which he preaches at times has none of these things?"

“That is exactly what I mean,” said Dodger.

“Then give me chapter and verse where we are commanded to have any of these things,” said Fairplay.

“We will give you nothing,” said Dodger.

“What?” said Fairplay. “You, posing not only as Christians, but as dignified ministers of the gospel—yea, as the pastors of the congregations—and, to the extent of your influence, shut as able and good a man as Philip Worthy off from all the avenues of usefulness, on the ground that he is not teaching the Bible or is not a safe Bible teacher; and when called upon to show wherein he fails to teach the Bible or any part of it, you say you will do nothing of the kind! Why, that is worse than slipping up and stabbing a man in the back. Why do you not appoint a delegation to go and confer with Worthy and show him where the Scriptures command those things that he is leaving out, if you can, and thereby give him a chance? I know the reason why you do not do it. It is because you yourselves know full well that there is not one syllable of scripture authority for any of those things for the omitting of which you condemn him. The trouble is this: You know that he is a safe Bible teacher, that you men are not, and that the very presence of one who does nothing but what is plainly taught by precept or example in the Bible is a hearty rebuke to you who teach and practice just anything that you, in your weakness and vanity, think is all right. From what you have said to-day and from the silence of these men about you, I think that this ‘preachers’ association,’ as you call it, is about as destitute of, and as oblivious to, the spirit of Christ and New Testament Christianity as a body of men could well be.”

Just at this point Rev. (?) Sturdy, chairman of the association, pounded the desk, stamped his foot, and said, with

all possible emphasis: "We can have no more of this. More than half the time for our programme has passed already. I would have called you down right on the start; but, then, I knew that you needed just such a drubbing as you have been getting and that Rev. Dodger was the very man to give it to you. But you do not seem to have sense enough to know when you are whipped; and now that your insolence has become intolerable, you must stop right where you are."

Fairplay and his friends then filed out of the house. When they were all out, Rev. (?) Walker arose and said: "Mr. Chairman, this time has been well spent, for we have seen the complete triumph of truth over error; and I move you, sir, that we give Brother Dodger a vote of thanks for his able defense of the truth."

"I second the motion," said Rev. (?) Talket.

"You have heard the motion," said the chairman. "Are there any remarks?"

Rev. (?) Rusher then arose and said: "Mr. Chairman, I am most heartily in favor of this motion: If this association should fail to take note of such valuable and valiant service, I do not feel that I would ever want to attend another meeting."

Several others spoke in the same strain, after which the chairman said: "You have heard the motion. All in favor of the same will please signify it by standing."

All sprang to their feet. Among the very first to stand were Revs. (?) Cower and Tody, who in their hearts saw through and disapproved of the whole thing, but reasoned that if they did anything to meet the disapproval of the leaders, or even arouse their suspicion, they were powerful, unscrupulous, and uncompromising, and would sink them

into oblivion if they could. So they tried to stand first to keep down suspicion.

Many present that day resolved to reward Dodger by promoting him at every opportunity; and, as a matter of fact, the very next time they made him president of the ministerial association, and at the next State convention they elected him president of the State board. To show their appreciation further, at the following State convention after his election to the presidency they made up money to send him to the national convention.

James Fairplay and his friends, who had attended this ministerial meeting with such bright and happy anticipation, returned home, disappointed, astonished, and righteously indignant. Philip Worthy knew nothing of the honest and heroic effort that his friend and brother, Fairplay, was making for him; and if he had, he would have discouraged him. While he had never been caught in their meshes, it was simply because he had never given them an opportunity. He had attended these associations and conventions long enough to learn from observation, and not from hearsay, just how they were conducted; and he had long since decided that he could not conscientiously work in them, and that, hence, he would have to steer as clear of their influence as possible. For that very reason he had selected the beautiful and prosperous city of Outway, where there was no church and which was quite a distance from the general meeting places of the conventions, etc. He preached for the First Church there quite regularly for a few years, till men developed proper qualifications for the eldership, when he organized the congregation and left the other elders (he himself was made an elder as soon as he had the scripture qualifications) to do most of the teaching; while he himself was sent out by the

congregation to do evangelistic work in the city, villages, and country places around. In addition to his evangelistic work, as already stated, he started a Bible class for the purpose of training young men for the ministry*. He began with two young men, John Hopeful and Peter Faithful, who requested instruction at first. Before one year had expired, there were fifteen in the class, all of whom were studying for the ministry.

At the expiration of three years, Philip, having held many meetings at different points in the city, and especially at two points, had succeeded in establishing good, strong missions at the two latter places, where some of the elders of the First Church (which had grown to four hundred members) had been teaching in his absence. At the request of these two missions, Brother Hopeful located at one place and Brother Faithful at the other. Here they taught these congregations, while members developed the necessary qualifications for elders and deacons. They continued their studies in school, while Philip and the elders of the First Church were doing the work of that church and assisting in establishing additional missions in the city and some in neighboring towns. The school had also now grown to fifty pupils, many of whom were preparing for the ministry, while the others were studying for the sake of Bible knowledge especially and other branches by the way. So by this time Philip had to introduce a regular curriculum of study.

CHAPTER IV.

About this time the thought came to James Fairplay that if they could not get to hear Philip Worthy at a ministerial association, they could get to hear him at their own home, which was Philip's old home also. So he, being a special friend of Philip's, wrote him as a friend, and not as an officer of the church (he had always refused to become either an elder or a deacon, because he had no children), to know whether he could come and hold them a meeting during the next vacation in case the officers of the congregation should so decide. Philip wrote him at once that he would like so much to do so; for his school had now assumed such proportions that it was really necessary for him to spend his vacations becoming acquainted with the people, receiving money for a school building, and getting students for the school.

So Fairplay attended the next meeting of the officers; and when an opportunity offered, he arose and said: "Brethren, I know that I have a piece of good news to break to you—news that will bring joy and gladness to every one of your hearts, as well as to the entire congregation. I have been corresponding with Philip Worthy simply as a friend; and while assuming no authority in the matter, I just asked him, in case you should desire him to come and hold us a meeting during next vacation, if it would be possible for him to come. He wrote me that he would be delighted to do so; and knowing that you would all be delighted to have him, I resolved to appear at your first meeting and lay the matter

before you, that you might lose no time in securing him before he should be engaged elsewhere."

Elders Cheer, Trust, and Happy said: "Language cannot express our joy and satisfaction."

Elder Cheer continued: "I know that the presence and preaching of a man of his great scholarship and ability, his almost pure life, and his stainless character will not only strengthen the brethren, but will convict and convert scores, if not hundreds. Besides, it will bring our plea prominently before the people and give our church a standing in the community that it could not have otherwise."

Elders Trust and Happy said: "Brother Cheer is right, and we are most heartily in favor of having Brother Worthy to come and hold the meeting. We know that it will be a great spiritual uplift to the community."

All this time James Fairplay was rejoicing from the depths of his inmost soul to think that the unscrupulous and uncompromising ministerial association was helpless to interfere with their work at Conway, for he knew that not one in the association had ever preached for them. True, they had had one meeting of the association in the town, but not in their church house; in fact, the elders had done all the public instructing, except an occasional meeting by Elder Booker, who preached when Philip Worthy, James Fairplay, and many others obeyed the gospel.

Imagine James Fairplay's surprise and utter astonishment when Elder Oblivious said: "I do not think that Worthy is the man to hold the meeting at all."

"Neither do I," said Elder Illwisher.

"Why not?" asked Fairplay.

"Well, we think that there are other men who would do the church a great deal more good," said Oblivious.

"I defy you to name one who could do us more good than Philip Worthy," said Fairplay.

"I think we could name several," said Oblivious.

"Just name one," said Fairplay.

"Elder Illwisher and I had thought of one especially, and had talked of mentioning his name to the officers here and requesting them to get him to hold our meeting," said Oblivious. "I have reference to Brother John Dodger."

"*John Dodger!*" exclaimed Fairplay. "*John Dodger!* Certainly you do not mean *John Dodger!* Why, we had just as well get the wicked one himself, for I have never seen a man more destitute of the spirit of Christ than John Dodger. Why, he is the chairman of the programme committee, who refused to put Philip on the programme when the ministerial association was held here a few years ago, because, as he said, the programme was already made out, but would try to remember him the next time; and when many of us went the next time to hear him, his name was not on the programme at all. When asked about it, he said he did not agree to put his name on the programme. I told him that he said that he would try to remember him the next time, but he said that *trying* to *remember* a thing and *doing* a thing were quite different. Finally, when he was pressed, he said plainly that they did not forget Philip at all, but left him off because he was not sufficiently able and was not a safe Bible teacher; but he was forced to admit Philip's ability and scripturalness in everything. Still, instead of yielding, as he should have done, he raved and abused me. The chairman of the association took sides with him at the time. They all passed a vote of thanks in his behalf, and I am told that they have been promoting him ever since. No; that man has absolutely no regard for his own word or respect for the

word of God. The man would have to repent of all of his miserable, gross, and awful sins before he would be worthy of even membership in the church, much less the pulpit; and to call him to hold a protracted meeting for us—it is simply too ridiculous to talk about, and I will oppose it to the very last.”

“Brother Fairplay,” said Oblivious, “it is not becoming in a Christian to go to such extremes. I have heard Brother Dodger several times of late; and he is not only an able speaker, but one of the most spiritual men whom I have ever heard.”

“Spiritual!” exclaimed Fairplay. “Why, the man does not know the meaning of the word ‘spiritual;’ and if a man ever did manifest the spirit of the wicked one, John Dodger did in his opposition to Philip Worthy. Besides, you know that he is in favor of every new thing that has ever been introduced into the church to mar the peace and happiness of God’s people and divide the churches all over the country.”

“Well,” said Oblivious, “rather than run along in an old rut, as we have been doing from the very beginning, I think we ought to be divided.”

“In an old rut!” said Fairplay. “What do you mean?”

“I mean,” said Oblivious, “to just run along in the old New Testament way of doing everything.”

“Why not?” asked Fairplay.

“You know as well as I do that times have changed,” said Oblivious; “and if we, as a church, do not change, too, and keep abreast with the times, we just make ourselves a laughingstock.”

“What?” said Fairplay. “Become a laughingstock because we will not teach and practice in a different way from that prescribed in the New Testament!”

“Of course we will,” said Oblivious, “and you know it.”

“Yes,” said Fairplay; “but which is better, to have the wicked world laughing at us here for doing right or to have Him who sitteth in the heavens laughing at our presumption and folly, as he did at the vanity of the earthly kings who took counsel together against the Lord’s Anointed?”

“O, Fairplay, you do make me so tired!” said Oblivious. “I have heard that old ‘rot’ all my life, and I do hope that some time I may be so situated that I will never hear it again.”

“Where, when, how, and why did you ever come to such a position as you now occupy?” asked Fairplay. “We always thought that you were in perfect sympathy with the work here; but, still, we might have known better by your profound silence at our officers’ meetings, especially when we were speaking against the introduction of things and organizations not taught in the word of God. Again, we might have known that you were not in sympathy with us from your frequent absence from our services.”

Elder Illwisher then spoke up and said: “You are exactly right about that. The prosy, old-time way of doing everything here, with never a change, has just about worn us out.”

“Why, then, did you not let it be known long ago?” said Fairplay.

“Do you think that we were simple enough to strike a cold iron?” said Illwisher. “No; we were waiting to get the iron hot, and then we could strike with some hope of shaping it to suit ourselves.”

“Then why did you think of requesting John Dodger’s services at this time?” asked Fairplay.

“Simply because we thought the iron not only hot, but red-

hot; not only red-hot, but at a white heat," answered Illwisher.

"You do not mean to say that others than you two elders are in favor of the changes suggested, do you?" said Fairplay.

"That is exactly what I mean," said Illwisher; "and if you do not believe what I say, you will soon have your mind disabused. There is no use of continuing this controversy any further; but I want to say to you plainly that John Dodger is going to hold a meeting in this town, with the consent of these other elders, if they will give it, but without their consent, if they will not give it. He will hold it in our church house, if you will let him; but if you will not let him, he will hold it elsewhere; for we have already agreed with him. Why, there is not a man in the association who stands higher than John Dodger. I attended a meeting of the ministers some time ago and told them that we wanted a man in sympathy with the workings of the association to come and hold us a meeting some time in the near future—one who could do the most to bring our church in line with the brotherhood; for, brethren, you know yourselves that as we do not have an Endeavor Society, a Christian Woman's Board of Missions, a Ladies' Aid, such a Sunday school as they all have, a salaried pastor, and especially as we do not work through their missionary societies, we are all out of line with our brotherhood; and it is not right, either. They agreed that John Dodger, who was away at that time in a great meeting, was the very man we needed—able, scholarly, scriptural, and eminently fitted in every way for the work at this place."

"But are the things which separate us even mentioned in the Bible?" asked Fairplay.

“There is that old threadbare argument again,” said Illwisher. “It makes me sick. If I were in your place, just for the sake of originality or a change, I would try to think up some other line of argument.”

“There is no other legitimate line of argument,” said Fairplay; “and in this there is no trickery or fraud, such as you men have had to resort to in order to carry your point here—I say ‘carry your point;’ for from what you say I presume that you have been quietly influencing the members, especially the younger members, by prevailing upon them to attend elsewhere just as often as you could, by having members of other congregations to attend here as often as possible and mix and mingle with our young people to influence them, and, further, by distributing their literature among them.”

“I could not have worded it any better myself,” said Illwisher. “You seem to understand the situation exactly as it is; and you will, no doubt, be astonished to see a large majority rally to Brother Dodger when he comes. They have already pledged their word. They say that they will do just anything for a change.”

“If you had never heard of God, Christ, or the Bible, you could not possibly have done a lower and meaner trick,” said Fairplay. “You can make the low, scheming, wire-pulling politician ashamed of himself.”

“Now, is that a Christlike spirit?” asked Illwisher.

“I am righteously indignant,” said Fairplay, “for I do not believe that the Savior himself would any more approve of such political scheming in connection with church work than I do.”

“Well,” said Elder Cheer, “I am astonished beyond measure at the present condition of things; for I was like Brother Fairplay: I thought that perfect peace and harmony pre-

vailed throughout the entire membership. We will now have to leave results with the Lord."

So they adjourned. Fairplay, Trust, and Happy went to Elder Cheer's home; while Illwisher went with Oblivious to his home, where quite a number of young people, and some not quite so young, had been waiting till a very late hour to hear the report of the conference.

"How did they take it?" asked young Alac Smart, the whole crowd leaving their seats, rushing to Oblivious, the men placing their hands upon his knees and the women placing their hands and elbows upon his shoulders.

"Take your seats, for it will take some time to tell it all," said Oblivious.

"Well, sir, the funniest thing happened that you could possibly imagine. Ha, ha, ha!" said Oblivious.

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Illwisher.

"Don't you think that Fairplay was there and proposed Philip Worthy's name? Puh, ha, ha, ha, ha! You will have to excuse me, for I declare to you that it was the most comical sight I ever saw," said Oblivious.

"Ha, ha, ha! He, he, he! Hi, hi, hi! Whoopee!" laughed Oblivious and Illwisher together.

Thus they continued till, with tears in their eyes and hands upon their hips, they ceased to make any noise—just stood and panted.

"Well," said Oblivious, "as I started to say, while Fairplay was not an officer of the church, he appeared before the officers to present Worthy's name. Did you ever see a brighter and more expectant face than Fairplay's, Brother Illwisher?"

"I never did in all my life; and didn't he give Worthy a great 'send off,' though?" said Illwisher.

“When an opportunity was offered,” said Oblivious, “Fairplay arose and said that he had some good news for them, which he knew would bring joy and gladness to their hearts. Then he proceeded to state that he had written Worthy simply as a friend; and while taking no authority whatever upon himself, he just asked him, if the officers of the church should see proper to ask him to hold a meeting for us during next vacation, if he could come. He said that Philip had written him that he would be very glad, indeed, to come and hold the meeting. ‘And,’ said Fairplay, ‘I just thought that I would appear at the officers’ first meeting and report, so that you could lose no time in securing him before he was otherwise engaged.’ When he said that, I looked over at Brother Illwisher and winked, and he reciprocated. When Fairplay had finished his speech, Brethren Cheer, Trust, and Happy almost shed tears of joy. Brother Cheer was the first to speak; and, I tell you, if he didn’t give Worthy a great puff! Why, he had the brethren strengthened; scores, if not hundreds, converted; and our church having a greater prestige than ever before. Yes, he anticipated a general spiritual uplift to the community. To this view Brethren Trust and Happy coincided with all their hearts. They all then made a long pause—I presume, to hear from us; but neither one of us said a word till they were just about to proceed to call him, never dreaming of our opposition, not even from our silence (for we have taken absolutely no part in the meetings, except to attend them, since we have been planning this thing, and attended just to keep ourselves informed as to what they were doing). So our silence aroused no suspicion whatever in their minds; but imagine their surprise when I told them frankly that I was not at all in favor of Worthy for the meeting, and as quick as thought Brother Ill-

wisher said: 'Neither am I.' I'll tell you that if you ever get into a fight, you want Brother Illwisher with you; for he will never leave you nor forsake you. Fairplay was mad because we objected to Worthy, and pressed us to know the ground of our objection. I told him that there were others who would do the church more good. 'Just name one,' said Fairplay. I told him that Brother Illwisher and I had talked to one especially—that is, Rev. John Dodger. When Fairplay heard Dodger's name, you just ought to have seen and heard him. He looked almost like a maniac; and if any one in the world ever got a scathing, we, and especially Brother Dodger, did. He said that if Dodger did not repent from the depths of his inmost soul of his miserable, gross, and awful sins, he was not fit for membership in the church, much less fit for the pulpit. Then he denounced us for political trickery and fraud in bringing this thing about as we have; but I told him that there was no use in discussing the matter further, for Brother Dodger was coming, and would hold the meeting—if not in our house, then in some other house—and that they would be surprised when they learned that a large majority were in favor of him. Then Brother Cheer said that he was surprised beyond measure; for, like Brother Fairplay, he thought that everything was perfectly harmonious, but that they would have to leave the results with the Lord. I felt a little sorry for old Brother Cheer, but I knew that it was no time for sentiment on our part. So I moved that we adjourn; and before Fairplay could interfere, Brother Illwisher said: 'I second the motion.' Brother Cheer called upon Brother Happy to pronounce the benediction, which he did; and we hurried away to keep from getting into it again."

"Good!" said Alac Smart. "I know that the Lord was

with you, or you never could have succeeded so well. Now let's all sing one verse of 'Praise God, from whom All Blessings Flow,' " which they did heartily.

After the singing, Oblivious said: "We are now in a position to do something, and we do not want to leave a stone unturned. The meeting is to begin in two weeks. In the meantime we want to advertise, hold cottage prayer meetings, and try in every way possible to have every man, woman, and child in the town and community not only to know that we are going to have a meeting, but the place of meeting, the time to begin, who is to hold the meeting, the character and reputation of the great evangelist, and even have them familiar with the face of the man by seeing it in a large picture in every prominent place in town."

To this all agreed most heartily, and they retired, to meet at Oblivious' house on the following Thursday evening (this was Monday evening) to hear Oblivious' report with reference to a place for holding the meeting. He had volunteered to do that himself, as he knew that it would be unpleasant, if not impossible, for those less hardened.

As has been stated, Trust, Happy, and Fairplay had gone home with Elder Cheer from the last officers' meeting; and they had spent a good part of the night discussing and praying over the situation. They deplored the condition of the church; but all agreed that inasmuch as they had tried to do their whole duty and had not intentionally turned away from the word of God for a single point in their teaching and practice, they could not be responsible for the present condition of the church. All prayed that the Lord's will, and not their own, might be done.

"Of course," said Elder Cheer, "they will ask for the

church house, and what do you brethren think would be the Lord's will concerning that?"

"Well," said Fairplay, "knowing Dodger as I do, I know that it is not the Lord's will for him to preach anywhere till he himself is converted."

"But," said Elder Trust, "you know that Elder Oblivious intimated that not only a majority, but a very large majority, were with them, in which case they can, if they leave it to a vote of the members (and I am told that that is the way that these association preachers do and teach), take it, anyway, even if we do have a majority of the elders."

"Yes," said Elder Happy; "but we will have to settle that just as we do everything else—that is, make an honest effort, do our duty, and leave the results with the Lord."

To this they all agreed.

"But suppose," said Fairplay, "they should outvote us and take the church house from us; what would be our duty, to leave the church?"

"No, indeed," said Elder Cheer. "I do not think so; for the Bible nowhere says that if the brethren do not do right we should leave the church, but it says the opposite, as was the case with the church at Sardis. All the members of that church, except a few, had gone far wrong; but the faithful few, instead of leaving the church because the majority were going very wrong, remained with them and did their full duty, in spite of the wrongdoing of the majority. For this God commended them, and promised them that they should walk with him in white. The same blessings will come to us if we act upon the same principle."

"Then, if I understand you," said Elder Cheer, "you all think that if they ask for the church for Dodger, it is our duty to object to it; that if a majority vote for him to have

it and he comes, anyway, we will not be responsible for his coming."

They all indicated that that was their decision, and Elder Cheer said: "It certainly is mine, too." So, with this understanding, they retired to await results.

The very next day (Tuesday) Oblivious came to see Elder Cheer (Fairplay happened to be present at the time), and said: "Are you and the other two elders willing to allow Brother Dodger to preach in our house?"

"Not if we can help it," said Elder Cheer.

"I know," said Oblivious, "that you have three elders, while we have only two; but we have a large majority of the members, and if you elders do not consent, we will bring it before the congregation, and there I know that we can out-vote you two or three to one."

"Yes," said Elder Cheer, "you can, no doubt, do that; but where do you get any Bible authority for settling church questions by a majority vote?"

"Brother Cheer," said Oblivious, "do you not know that every denomination in Christendom and nearly all of our own churches, and especially our preachers, settle things that way? Why, they have made the annual resignation and election of officers almost the universal rule; and by so doing, if they have an objectionable elder or deacon, by having all to resign, if they will manage it just right, in the new election they can leave the objectionable ones out."

"Yes," said Fairplay, "I have heard all that; but it is almost incredible. Having the officers to resign for the avowed purpose of getting rid of the objectionable ones is as political and worldly as dissolving Parliament for the same purpose, and any man or men who would adopt or in any way sanction such an unscriptural method are just as objec-

tionable as those whom they thereby get rid of can possibly be."

"I was not talking to you, Fairplay," said Oblivious. "You are always in the wrong place and speak at the wrong time. I did not know that you were here, or I should have waited till you were gone."

"I know," said Fairplay, "that you and those in sympathy with your way of working would sink me and every other man into oblivion who dares to puncture your worldly and wicked wind bags—these 'pastors,' as they call themselves, although some of them are nothing but young men and cannot control themselves, much less the church of God. Yet they not only want to (and do, after their own fashion) rule the entire congregation—elders, deacons, and all—for which they preach; but by this Satanic system of the annual resignation of the officers, which results in leaving those opposed to them out, some of them have never given the churches an opportunity to say whether they desired to re-engage them since their first call; and then they boast and gloat in the papers—East, West, North, and South—over their long pastorates, when some of them at least know that at the same time a large per cent of their members are trying every year to devise some means to get rid of them, and that many, on account of failing to get rid of them, do not attend at all, but go to other churches of Christ in the town or to the sectarian churches. That is not the worst of all yet; for if these young fellows, and some who are not so young, through missionary machinery, happen to be lifted up into official positions, then they actually 'lord it over' the elders, not only of the congregations for which they preach, but of the entire district over which they preside; and woe betide any elder or congregation who objects to any of their mission-

ary plans or refuses to work through their missionary societies! If such congregations pay four times as much for home and foreign missions as their own congregations, even if they support missionaries at home and abroad, still they are denounced as 'antimissionary.' This they know to be a falsehood, upon which the wicked one himself could not improve."

"I will not listen to such a tirade of abuse any longer," said Oblivious. "I am going, and we will all be at church Sunday to settle the question."

"You ought to have had the decency not to come," said Fairplay.

"Shut up!" said Oblivious; and out he went.

When Oblivious had gone, Elder Cheer said: "Brother Fairplay, every word you say is true, but awfully cutting—so much so that it may do them no good."

"That is so," said Fairplay; "but it will do them no good to let them go on in this way, and I am determined to expose them at every opportunity."

When Lord's day came, there never was so large an audience present. There were members there who had not been in the house for years—indeed, some who had been away so long that their names had actually been dropped from the church books. Besides, there were quite a number there to vote that day who had left them and joined the denominational churches in the town (there were three at that time): Their preachers had agreed to this in order to get rid of the so-called "anti" element in the church; for they shunned not to declare "the whole counsel of God," which necessarily exposed their denominational errors. They knew that Dodger and those in favor with him would suppress a part of the truth for the sake of the good will of the sectarians.

For this reason they were willing for the members who had come from this church to go back now and vote, or even take membership again, rather than miss the liberal impression that they knew Dodger's preaching would make. They had all offered their houses in case they could not get their own.

After the usual order of worship, Oblivious went to Elder Cheer and said: "Will you make the statement and put the vote?"

"No," said Elder Cheer, "I do not think that that is the way prescribed in the Bible to do the Lord's work; therefore I cannot conscientiously have anything to do with it."

Oblivious then went to Elders Trust and Happy, who said about the same thing. Then, turning to the great audience, he said: "We have met to-day for the purpose of deciding whether we will allow Rev. Dodger to hold his great meeting in this house, beginning next Sunday week. Elder Illwisher and I are most heartily in favor of it; but Elders Cheer, Trust, and Happy are as much opposed to it as we are in favor of it. So we are compelled to call upon the congregation to decide it for us. Now, is there a motion to let him have this house in which to hold the meeting?"

As quick as thought, Alac Smart was on his feet, and said: "Mr. Chairman, I move you, sir, that Rev. Dodger be permitted to hold the meeting in this house, beginning next Sunday week."

"I second the motion," said young Miss Reckless.

"You have heard the motion," said Oblivious. "Are there any remarks?"

James Fairplay then arose and said: "Yes; I have some remarks to make. If this congregation were the most rotten of the rotten political machines, then I would not be surprised at this or anything else; but to reconcile this action

with the spirit and genius of Christianity is an utter impossibility. In the first place, these elders, Oblivious and Ill-wisher, have appropriate names; for they certainly are as oblivious and ill wishing to everything that is right and just and holy and good as any two men I ever saw. This country has never produced a politician who stooped to lower and meaner trickery than you have in bringing about the present condition of things. Dodger, the man whom they have selected to hold this meeting and with whom they have already agreed, without even saying a word to the other elders, also has an appropriate name; for if there ever was a man who at least tries to dodge every truth that interferes with his schemes in any way, it certainly is Dodger. He fears neither God nor man. In his whole life he dishonors God, defies Heaven, and plunges into just any sin—even to misinterpreting, misapplying, adding to, or taking from the word of God—when necessary to carry out his iniquitous purposes.”

“‘All hail the power of Jesus’ name,’” said Alac Smart; and apparently the whole congregation joined in. When they concluded one verse, they stopped.

James Fairplay continued: “Now that is exactly what I have been trying to prove to you that they would do if they only had an opportunity; but they have illustrated it a great deal better than I could tell it, and—”

“Shall we sing the second verse?” said Smart, interrupting Fairplay.

Just as they closed the second verse, Oblivious said: “All in favor of the motion will let it be known by standing.”

If it had not been known from what had transpired before that the three elders and Fairplay would not vote with them,

one would have thought that all had voted; but these, together with a very few others, did not vote.

When the negative was called for, no one stood up.

"That settles it," said Oblivious.

"Yes, that settles it," said Fairplay; "and—"

"Shall we sing the third verse?" said Smart, interrupting Fairplay again.

Oblivious, seeing that there was no chance to do any further business while Fairplay was present, was pretty well along with the benediction when they finished the third verse; and when he was done, they all went right out and to their homes, leaving the few opposers to themselves. They all decided then and there that they would attend upon the services just the same, participate in those things only that they thought were right, and at the same time reserve to themselves the right to protest, in the proper spirit, against everything that was unscriptural. This right Fairplay prized very highly, and he made good use of it so often and in such a telling way during the meeting and after that the church voluntarily granted him and those who sympathized with him letters of dismissal in order to get rid of them; but still they all attended, with all possible regularity, to the great dissatisfaction and annoyance of the others.

After the decision to extend the house to Dodger, Oblivious and Illwisher were the center of as busy a beehive of workers as were ever seen, getting ready for their meeting. There never was a town more thoroughly billed or a meeting more thoroughly announced than this one. When Dodger came, he proved to be all that they had represented him to be. The ministers of the three churches almost dispensed with their own services entirely and urged all their people to attend the revival meeting, and they themselves attended and as-

sisted in every way they could; and not one of them lost a member, for the reason that Dodger dodged all controverted passages of scripture and everything that was calculated to make inroads upon sectarianism. By all combining and working, they had what they all called a "good meeting."

At the close of the meeting they engaged Dodger as pastor—the first preacher-pastor they had ever had. Then it was announced in the papers far and near that the church was now in line with the brotherhood; that they had just organized all the regular societies; and that they were now ready to respond to all the demands made by the various missionary societies. Congratulations were sent in by every association preacher.

CHAPTER V.

At the next ministerial meeting all were loud and long in their praise of those who had made possible the change in the order of things at Conway, especially of John Dodger. He was then called upon to tell the association just how the apparently impossible task was accomplished. He began at the very beginning and told it all, for the association would receive nothing less. Said he: "Elders Oblivious and Ill-wisher came to see me about whether anything could be done; and if so, how? I told them that it could be done and proceeded to tell them how. I told them that we had young Sister Inroad in our congregation; you all know her."

"Yes, indeed," said all present.

"Well, I said she was one of the most indefatigable society workers you ever saw; in fact, the regular societies are not sufficient for her in her work. She uses them all; and, in addition, she has an extra way or two of working what you might call 'societies.' I told them that we would call and see her, state the situation, and tell her exactly what you want; and we can, through her, bring it about. When we laid the matter before her, she said: 'Rev. Dodger, with your permission, I will attend their services next Sabbath.' 'All right,' said I. So the next Sunday she went to Conway, where Brother Oblivious entertained her. She attended the Bible school (they had no Sunday-school literature), and she said: 'I had to sit and listen to that old, illiterate Elder Cheer and others who are as illiterate as he is "chew the rag" for an hour. That was not all; for the same old men

proceeded to speak to the "edification of the church," as they called it, for almost another hour, after which they had the communion service; and, I tell you, we were all tired by that time. During all this long, dry, and most tedious service I was watching the young people; and among them I saw one young lady who seemed more indifferent and restless than others. After the services were all over, I went to her and asked her if that was the way in which they conducted all their services. "Yes," said she, "and they never have any change or variety. Sometimes I just get so tired that I can hardly live." I asked: "Have you no young people's meeting?" "No," she said; "we have nothing except what you have seen here to-day, and I do not see why there would be any harm in having a change occasionally." I knew that I had found the one through whom I was to begin the Herculean task. So I asked Sister Outgo (that was the restless young lady's name) if she could not attend our services the next Sabbath. She said: "I certainly would like to, and think that perhaps I can." So when I appeared at Sunday school the next time, whom should I see, the very first one, but Sister Outgo? I gave her just as cordial a welcome as one ever received anywhere, and introduced her to many young ladies and gentlemen, which she appeared to appreciate very much; for it was something of which they had very little at home. Then, it would have done your souls good to have seen her when the great organ prelude started, for you could just see that it thrilled her through and through. They had no instrumental music of any kind in her home church. Then, when the march started and the various classes filed out to their places, she was so interested that she stood to one side that she might watch them. She said it was the grandest sight that she ever saw. After the

Sunday school, Rev. Dodger preached a beautiful and most magnificent thirty-minute discourse upon the theme "The Æsthetic in Religion," and presided at the Lord's table himself. After very brief and well-chosen remarks, he offered thanks for both bread and wine at the same time and had both passed at once. Sister Outgo said: "It certainly was the shortest and sweetest service that I ever attended." She went home with me, and she could scarcely talk about anything else but the Sunday school and forenoon service. That evening we attended the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor; and as I was to preside, I whispered around to the most active members before the meeting that we wanted to have more snap and spirit in our meeting than common on Sister Outgo's account; and I must say that I never attended a more enthusiastic meeting in my life. Sometimes there would be three or four on the floor at one time, all wanting to talk. The meeting following the young people's meeting was fully up to the standard. The next morning, when Sister Outgo started home, she said: "I never enjoyed a day so much in all my life; and if we cannot bring about a change in our prosy services at home, I feel like coming here when I attend anywhere." "No," said I; "you need not attend here. While, of course, we would all be so glad to have you attend here, still I think that you can do more good right where you are. If you will do as I say, you can soon have the same services at home, and I will tell you how it can be done. You make strict confidants of Elders Oblivious and Illwisher. They came to see Rev. Dodger with reference to this matter, and the three came to see me; and that private conference resulted in my having attended upon your services last Sunday. Now you know your young people upon whom your services are the most wearing. You ap-

proach these one at a time, and, without suggesting a change, remark to them that somehow you become very tired before the services are over, and that, while you do not see just how it can be done, yet if the services could be changed or shortened without doing violence to the law of the Lord, you would not become so tired. Do not say that you would enjoy the services better; for if the one with whom you are talking does not happen to be in sympathy with you, he might suspicion you. If you simply say that we would not become so tired, and he agrees with you, he will be very apt to say so; and if he expresses himself heartily, you might then ask him casually if he has ever attended services here. If he says that he has not, then you can say to him that you have and that things were so different from your services. Without telling him how you liked the services, just say to him that if he ever happens to be here on Sunday he should attend our services. I will watch for him, make it pleasant for him; and if he is as favorably impressed as you have been, I will make a confidant of him and tell him about what I have told you." Thus one after another was induced to attend our services, every one of whom was impressed about as Miss Outgo was; and with Rev. Dodger's consent, we went to their place one or two at a time; and while their services bored us nearly to death, we never let it be known but what we enjoyed them immensely. Thus the young people of the two churches became very well acquainted. No doubt those old brethren thought when they saw so many of us attend their services from time to time that we were greatly impressed with their services and that everything was coming their way. While none of us were sworn, yet our promises of secrecy were so positive that they were akin to an oath; and be it said to the everlasting praise of the members there

and here that not one of them ever divulged the secret. Hence the complete surprise to the very few who remained. 'Now, brethren,' said Dodger, "that is the way that it was accomplished."

"Amen, amen!" shouted almost all the preachers at once.

"I admit that it does not look exactly right," said Dodger. "It looks a little undermining; but, brethren, what else could we do?"

"Nothing, nothing: you did right," responded a chorus of voices.

"We thought it was better to waive the appearance of the thing than to just let that congregation remain lost to the brotherhood," said Dodger. "We were disappointed in but one thing—that is, we thought that those 'anti' brethren would go out when we introduced the new order of things, and especially James Fairplay; but—bless your souls!—I do not think that one of them has ever missed a service since."

"Too bad, too bad! God help!" was heard all over the house.

"And James Fairplay, who is their ringleader," continued Dodger, "has made it so hot for us that we had to present him and all the rest with letters of dismissal; for we could not introduce or say a single thing for which there was not a plain precept or example in the New Testament but what Fairplay, with the manifest sanction of all the others, was offering objections and calling for scripture authority. So it became so intolerable that we called a meeting and decided to present them with letters of dismissal, but still they came as regularly as ever. Fairplay even calls for scripture precept or example for sending them letters of dismissal, and quotes the scripture where they were told to go—one, then one with one or two more; then if they would not hear, to tell

it to the church, etc. We knew that the scripture read that way as well as he did; but we knew also that to go to them simply meant a controversy, and that they would never yield, because they happened to have the *Scriptures* on their side. So we decided to just go on, do the best we could, and leave the results with the Lord."

Then Rev. (?) Walker arose and said: "Brother Dodger has done a wonderful work at Conway. While the work was not quite so complete as we would have liked, in that the 'antis' did not go out, yet he has given them some hard knocks; and I do not believe that there is a man in the brotherhood who could have done so much for that congregation as he has. I, for one, think that this case should be written up and printed, and that a copy of the same be sent to every progressive congregation, if not to every member of such congregation, in the United States, so that when a similar work is needed anywhere they will know exactly for whom to send—that is, John Dodger; and if at any time the community becomes too much down on him for the unscrupulous methods that he adopts in bringing about the changes, we will all be on the lookout for a new field for him, so that he can resign at any time he feels that things are getting too hot for him. Yes, I will put it stronger than that: I am in favor of his resigning when things get too hot or his work fails to boom as at first, even if he has no field to which he can go at once, and being supported by contributions from the various churches till a field does open up for him. In the meantime he could be writing and putting his schemes in form, so that they can be used where he cannot be in person or after he is dead and gone."

Rev. (?) Talket was the next to arise. He said: "I am heartily in favor of all that Brother Walker has said. I do

not apprehend, however, that Brother Dodger will ever lack employment; for I think that, in the light of the fact that there are so many 'anti' churches all over the country that ought to be brought in line with the brotherhood and in the light of the fact that through such a man as Rev. Dodger it is so much easier to capture an 'anti' congregation than to establish a new one, he will be in such demand for this work that he will have but little time for anything else. I hope, however, that he may be able to remain at Conway long enough to kick those 'antis' entirely out there."

Rev. (?) Rusher was the next speaker, and deposed as follows: "The brethren who have preceded me are exactly right. It takes many a knock, kick, and cuff to bring some 'antis' into line, and I know that Rev. Dodger is the most gifted man in this work that there is in the world. His work in his chosen field seems almost phenomenal. So I move you, Mr. Chairman, that the Conway case be written up, printed, and circulated, as suggested by Brother Walker."

"Is there a second to this motion?" asked the chairman.

"I second the motion," said Brother Tody; for he was afraid he would be suspicioned if he did not take some part.

"You have heard the motion," said the chairman. "Are there any remarks?"

"Question!" "Question!" was upon the tongue of almost every one.

"All in favor of the motion as stated will please rise," said the chairman; and with one mighty sweep all stood.

They then concluded with an appropriate song and benediction; and all went away feeling that it was the best, most spiritual, and most profitable session in the history of their association.

CHAPTER VI.

James Fairplay said to the three elders who were opposed to the way things had gone: "I have not given up yet. I have decided that the preachers in this part are but intellectual and spiritual pigmies and do not represent the preachers of our brotherhood at all. The next time I will go clear beyond their influence, and there I will expose their meanness in a way that they will never forget. I shall next ask a place for Philip Worthy on the programme of the State convention; and I know that when the 'popgun' preachers of this part see Philip's name on that programme, and especially when they read the great address that he shall deliver there—in the papers, or possibly in tract form, as ordered by the enthusiastic convention—they will feel very small for having refused him a place on their little ministerial association programme."

The elders said they did not know what he could do.

Fairplay wrote his friend and brother, Worthy, about what an awful time he had had about the meeting and how completely he had been defeated. He also mentioned his sore disappointment and utter astonishment that the preachers had so much influence in the congregation at Conway, when not one of them had ever preached there.

Philip smiled when he read the letter, and thought: "Well, Friend Fairplay, you do not understand the preachers and the working of the conventions as well as I do." He wrote Fairplay, however, that he thanked him as kindly for his friendly and zealous effort as if he had succeeded well, and

that he hoped to see him and be with him some time in the future—if not there, then elsewhere.

It was now nine months till the next State convention. So Fairplay thought that he would take time by the forelock and put Philip's bid for a place on the programme thus early, so as to avoid the pretended trouble at Conway—that is, of having the programme already made out. He thought it would be more satisfactory all round to go in person, for he thought he would not have the thing to miscarry for anything reasonable.

Fairplay went and called upon Henry Trusty, the State secretary, and said: "Brother Trusty, I do love the cause of Christ. I cannot do as much for the cause as some men, and there are some features of the church work that I cannot perform at all; so I have to do what I can the best I can and leave the rest for others. In many instances I feel that I can accomplish much more through, or by enlisting, others than I can by making the effort myself. Especially do I feel and know that this is true in the case I am about to propose. I know that you brethren are exceedingly anxious to make the programmes of your State conventions as attractive, and at the same time as edifying, as you possibly can. Having, as you do, present at these conventions, at such a select and popular place, the brightest and most intellectual of all denominations and of no denomination, you will necessarily have to have the most able, scholarly, and influential among us on the programme in order to meet the demand."

"Exactly so," said Trusty.

"Well," said Fairplay, "I have a name to suggest; and if you will place it upon your programme, I promise you that your next convention will be the best one ever held in

the State. On account of the presence of him whose name I am about to mention, you will see many there who never attended a convention before. He is one of the finest scholars, most eloquent speakers, and one of the best men this country has ever produced; and I am certain that many would come hundreds of miles to hear him. I refer to that eminent literary and Bible scholar, preacher, and educator at Outway, Philip Worthy."

Fairplay never thought once but that Trusty would be in ecstasies at the bare thought of procuring such a name for the convention programme; hence he had become very warm and eloquent in his references to Worthy's ability and character; and it was like hitting him between the eyes with a limestone rock or over the head with a two-handed, seasoned elm club when Trusty said, without any apparent interest and absolutely no enthusiasm: "W-e-l-l, I think the programme is already provided for."

"What?" said Fairplay. "The programme provided for *nine months* before the convention! I do not believe it. That is what your 'Rev. Dodger,' as you call him, said about the programme at Conway a year or two ago. I believed him at the time, but later I was convinced beyond the possibility of a doubt that it was not so; and for you to say that the programme for the State convention nine months hence is already made out—I do not believe a word of it, and will not believe it till the testimony becomes simply overwhelming."

"I would like to know what you have to do with it," said Trusty.

"I would like to know what *you* have to do with it," said Fairplay; "and I want to know, further, how it is that you

men have never heard of Philip Worthy and have never had him on any of your programmes."

"Thank you, sir!" said Trusty. "We have heard of him and know all about him, and for that very reason we have never had him on any of our programmes; and if you do not let up, I will tell you some things about Worthy that will make your ears tingle."

"I know all about him myself," said Fairplay. "I know that there is not a stain upon his life or character; he is *pure gold*; and no man can say aught against him without speaking falsely."

"Then you had as well prepare for the worst," said Trusty, "for you have compelled me to tell all. You seem to think that we had never heard of Worthy. Why, he is this 'anti' man who is trying to hold forth away up at Outway. He thought that he could get away off out there, where he could just keep those good people in ignorance, and thereby make himself Chief Mogul among them, without let or hindrance. His people up there, because of his 'anti' methods of doing everything, are completely lost to the brotherhood. To put such a man on our programmes is too ridiculous to talk about. We will not only refuse to give him such prominence, but will interfere with every attempt that he makes beyond the limits of Outway; and we even have our agencies at work to, if possible, dislodge him at Outway."

"'Anti' man!" said Fairplay. "'Anti' what? Tell me what you mean."

"I mean '*antimissionary*;' that is what I mean," said Trusty.

"If you were to say that east is west or black is white, you would be as near to the truth," said Fairplay. "There never was a baser falsehood told, and you know it. 'Anti'

missionary! At the same time four or five strong missions have been established, with good houses of worship and from one hundred and fifty to three hundred and fifty members in each, in his home city; missions in the towns, villages, and country places around; besides sustaining four or five missionaries at home and two or three in foreign fields. In addition to all this, he has established a school from which young men, prepared for the ministry, are going out every year. He is doing ten times more work and raising more money for missionary purposes than any man in the brotherhood, and you call him 'antimissionary!' It's false! It's a miserable, gross, and an awful falsehood! If you die with this awful sin upon you and the devil doesn't get you, I don't see any use in having a devil."

"You talk and act like a demon in human form," said Trusty.

"It's a compliment," said Fairplay, "coming, as it does, from you, sir; for you say just as hard things about Philip Worthy, whose character and life work are above reproach. You speak of knowing all about Worthy and of having your agencies at work to dislodge him at Outway. Who is your informant, and who are your agencies?"

"I should not tell you, were it not with a faint hope of getting rid of you," said Trusty: "Because Worthy is not in good standing with the brethren, for he never attends the conventions or preachers' meetings; his church is out of line with the brotherhood, for it never sends any missionary money through the missionary societies. For these good and sufficient reasons we are determined to dislodge him, if we possibly can; and by so doing, we verily believe that we will be doing God the most efficient service possible. As to our agencies, Rev. John Dodger, of your own congregation, and

young Sister Inroad, of Rev. Dodger's former place of preaching, are our leaders, besides many others; in fact, we all do what we can."

"I now begin to see through the whole thing," said Fairplay, calmly. "I thought I would come away off up here, where I would be entirely free from under the influence of John Dodger, that 'wolf in sheep's clothing,' if there ever was one; but now, for the first time, I begin to see that this is an organized and perfectly systematized business, and that you are in close touch and intimate communication with Dodger, Miss Inroad, and every other emissary of the wicked one in this State. You now talk of doing God efficient service through Dodger and others. You are in a position to do the devil most efficient service. I thought when you said Worthy was not in good standing with his brethren, his church was out of line with the brotherhood, etc., that the language sounded familiar—that I had heard it somewhere. It was all clear when you mentioned Dodger's name. That is the rotten argument that he offered for not letting Worthy's name appear on the ministerial programme. Now, before I go, I want to say to you, with reference to your 'State board,' as you call it, that, *as such*, you have not one single syllable of New Testament authority for anything that you do, or even for your existence. Yet you arrogate to yourselves the prerogative of sitting in judgment over your preaching brethren, lifting up and putting down whom you will; and I have no doubt in my mind—or, at least, I would not put it beyond you to ask every preacher entering the State to deposit his credentials with the State secretary or to hand him a card with a number of questions for him to answer; and if he failed to either deposit his credentials or answer the questions, his name would be put down on a 'black list,' so to

speaking, and all the secretaries in the United States be notified of the fact, so that he would have to come to time or do without a pulpit. You arrogate to yourselves the prerogative of 'lording it over' the elders of all the congregations in the State, to set the 'anti' (missionary society) churches in order—'bring them in line with the brotherhood,' as you say, which, being interpreted, means to compel them to work through your man-made societies. Again, you encourage the people over the State to pay their money into the State treasury, to be expended by installments of, say, ten dollars a month to each weak church to assist in paying the salary of the preacher. You then arrogate to yourselves the prerogative of virtually naming the preachers for the fields assisted; and when accused of it, you look as wise and say: 'Why, of course. The money is intrusted to us, and we are responsible for the men who do the preaching.' Thus you have virtually destroyed the independence of such congregations, till if a preacher—however able and reputable he may be—offers his services, even if the congregation is now able to pay his salary without the assistance of the board, he is not engaged till the congregation has conferred with the board. It makes no difference whence he comes or whither he goes, the State board, through a system of intercommunication of all the State secretaries, knows all about him; and woe betide the preacher who has ever lifted his voice against the State board's system of doing things or has in any way aroused the suspicion of even one member of it! If the preacher has aroused suspicion, the said member communicates the same to the other members of the board; and, through their secretary, the secretaries of all other State boards are notified, and they all place his name on their 'black lists.' "

“Of course,” said Trusty. “If the secretaries do not look after these things, who will? Unworthy preachers would come in and impose upon the weaker churches. Besides, we are the only men who are in a position to inform ourselves thoroughly with reference to the character and standing of the preachers all over the country; and while we do not compel them to deposit their credentials with the secretaries, yet we do, in some States, present them with a card, with a list of questions to answer, in order, as I have said, to keep designing and unworthy preachers from imposing upon the weaker churches.”

“I wonder,” said Fairplay, “what the Lord thinks of such arrogance. Here you are—but young men, many of you; and some of you are wholly incapable of controlling yourselves, much less a church of God. Yet, without a syllable of scripture for the positions you occupy, you presume to have the care and oversight of, and are responsible for, *all the churches*. Can you imagine anything more God-dishonoring and Heaven-defying? You talk of saving the weak churches from unworthy preachers. I want to tell you now that the churches will never fall into worse hands than your own; for you have absolutely no respect for the law of the Lord and will, without any authority whatever, proceed to adopt a worldly system which has laid many faithful, devoted, and conscientious preachers of the gospel upon the shelf just at the age when, on account of their ripe scholarship, experience, and mature judgment, they were the safest leaders possible. Thus you rob God of many of the richest years of these men’s services. And why? Simply because they are too conscientious to indorse your worldly schemes for carrying on the Lord’s work. Your very schemes that lay the most conscientious men upon the shelf have made

places for, and called to the front and prominent places, the scheming, designing men who apparently have no heart or conscience upon the subject. It is position and salary they are after; and having no conscience on the subject, they can subscribe to just anything or adopt any scheme suggested."

"You talk of our 'lording it over' God's heritage," said Trusty; "but you want to 'lord it over' us, which is the same principle."

"I want to do nothing of the kind," said Fairplay. "I simply asked you to give one of the best (if not *the* best) men in our brotherhood, as well as the most able, a place on one of your programmes. Then talk of my wanting to 'lord it over' the State board! I never did oppose the State boards. I simply wondered why such men as Worthy never attended the conventions or were not members of the boards from time to time and why so many able and good men were laid upon the shelf—and that, too, at their most useful time of life. It is all plain now; I understand it all. It is simply because their conscience will not allow them to attend. Men are laid upon the shelf because they have, through their devotion to the word of God, dared to object to your unscriptural methods. I will be compelled to go back home heart and hand, soul and body, life and spirit against State boards."

"Oppose all you please," said Trusty. "The boards are here, and they are here to stay."

"Not with my consent," said Fairplay; and he started for home.

Upon Fairplay's return, he called Elders Cheer, Trust, and Happy together, and they spent hours talking over the situation.

Fairplay gave his experience with the State secretary. "Why," said he, "did you know that that secretary and the

State board, through the secretary, know as much about us and our work here as we do? Well, they do. They also know as much about Philip Worthy and his work as we do. I pressed him so hard that finally he told how he found it out—that is, through John Dodger, Miss Inroad, and others. Don't you think that he talks of Worthy and his work exactly as Dodger does? In fact, if there had not been any difference in the tone of voice and I could not have seen the man, I would have testified on oath that it was Dodger talking. Of course I thought they knew nothing about Philip Worthy; otherwise they would have had him on their programmes long ago; but imagine my surprise when he referred to Philip as that 'anti' man trying to hold forth away up there at Outway. He did not stop at that, but went on to say that Philip thought he would get away off out there, where he would not be interfered with, where he could keep those people in ignorance, and thereby make himself Chief Mogul. He said, further, that they not only knew all about Worthy and his work, but that they had agencies at work to dislodge him at Outway. Had their agencies! Just think of it! When I pressed him so hard that he just had to tell me who their agencies were, he said they were Rev. Dodger, Miss Inroad, and others. Now, brethren, you know my weakness. When he said that, I was righteously indignant; and, I tell you, I took it off that secretary in fleaks as broad as your two hands. At that point both of my eyes flew wide open to the entire situation. I proceeded to accuse them of almost everything mean I could think of; and I poured it into him so thick and fast and pressed him so hard that, in his confusion and insane madness, he not only admitted all, but tried to justify their positions. For instance, (1) I accused them of taking advantage of the fact that they

paid ten dollars a month on various salaries in the weaker churches and named the preachers for such places, and thereby destroyed the independence of the congregations, till they could not, or would not, engage any man till they had conferred with the State board. He admitted it, and said, in great surprise: 'Why not? The churches have intrusted this money to us, and we feel responsible for the men who receive it.' (2) I accused them of being in communication with all the State secretaries in the United States; that they had a system of 'blacklisting' all those who objected to anything they were doing or in any way aroused the suspicion of a single member of a single board in the United States, for that member of the board would communicate his suspicion to the other members of the board, and, through their secretary, they would communicate it to all the other secretaries, and he would at once be 'blacklisted' throughout the United States, and, whatever his ability or character, he could not get work if the boards could help it; and that thus many able men were put on the shelf long before their work was done. He admitted it, and insisted that that was the only way that they could save the weak churches from unworthy preachers. (3) I accused them of requesting every preacher who entered the State to deposit his credentials with the State secretary or presenting him with a list of questions to answer; and if he refused to do either, they would put his name on the 'black list' and communicate the fact to all the secretaries in the United States. He admitted that while it was not the universal rule among them—and, indeed, that they compelled none to do either—yet it was the custom of some State boards to *request* it. Now, I have spoken to you at length, that you may know that there is a systematized opposition against the New Testament way of doing

things throughout this country, and not simply in this immediate part, as we might suppose."

"Well," said Elder Cheer, "I had no idea that such a condition existed."

"Nor did I," said Fairplay, "until my experience with the secretary. I thought that such conditions might exist in certain localities—worse, of course, in this than in any other because of Dodger's presence. Hence to have it sprung upon me all at once that it was systematized throughout the country was like a crashing thunderbolt from a clear sky; hence my lack of mercy with the secretary."

"What can we do?" asked Elder Trust.

"As I have said before," said Elder Happy, "we can only do our duty, as the faithful few at Sardis did; and then we can rejoice at all times in the promise that we shall walk with our Heavenly Father in white when the battle is over."

To this all agreed, but Fairplay said: "Christianity means opposition to sin and wickedness in all its forms, wherever and whenever it appears."

"Yes," said Elder Cheer; "but we must be judicious about it. Our opposition even to sin must be opportune, so as not to cause some of the weaker and lesser informed to fall."

To this they all agreed heartily; but, of course, it meant one thing to Fairplay and quite a different thing to the other three. Fairplay, because of his temperament, would think opposition opportune when the others would not. None realized that fact more than Dodger and those in sympathy with him. He was frequently heard to say that if Fairplay would only die or get killed, then they could accomplish something; that he thought they could manage those other brethren; that he believed they would go out on their letters of dismissal, were it not for Fairplay. At the preachers' meet-

ing he said more than once: "We will have to have at least one funeral, if not more than one, in our congregation before we can accomplish much. I never was able to ferret out just what Paul's thorn in the flesh was; but whatever it was to Paul, it bore absolutely no comparison to James Fairplay to me and the congregation at Conway. While Paul, single and alone, prayed three times for the Lord to remove his thorn and the Lord did not remove it, I know that we have prayed collectively more than a hundred times for the Lord to remove James Fairplay; but the Lord has not seen proper to remove him yet. The Lord told Paul that his grace was sufficient for him; but, brethren, it will take infinitely more grace to enable us to endure our thorn. Thus far God has neither seen proper to remove him nor to grant us the grace. So we are still planning and scheming to get rid of him."

While Dodger's witty wording of his statement provoked a great deal of merriment, the stubborn fact provoked much sympathy.

When Trusty appeared at the next State board meeting, the very first thing called for was his interview with Fairplay. They had all heard of it. Trusty was very reticent about it; for after Fairplay had gone and he had cooled down and remembered how he had, in the heat of passion, given the whole thing away, the thought came to him that if the brethren found it out they would have to change his name, if they did not dispense with his services. So he said to himself: "Now my only salvation is to not report *all* that occurred between us; and if Fairplay reports the thing, I will denounce it as a lie." He eased his conscience by reasoning thus: "We all suppress a part of God's truth when necessary to carry out our plans for which we have no scrip-

ture; and why not suppress a part of the truth in this case, when my very secretarial, if not ministerial, head depends upon it?"

So Trusty reported the interview only in a general way. He said: "It was very warm, indeed, at times; but, I tell you, I gave him just as good as he sent, until he was perfectly willing to quit; and I venture he will never tackle me again."

In this way Trusty satisfied the other members of the board; so that they congratulated him for his defense of their worldly systems, and said that he had an appropriate name and that they were willing to trust him still.

James Fairplay—defeated, disappointed, astonished, but undaunted—resolved to make another and final effort for his friend, Worthy, who was at that time in the midst of his not only successful, but constantly increasing, labors at Outway. If there ever was a man who, in profound meekness and humility, controlled the city and community in which he resided, it was Philip Worthy. People generally looked upon him as head and shoulders above any other man in the community, from a standpoint of scholarship. He would impress an audience as knowing everything. Besides, almost every one looked upon him as humility and spirituality almost personified. Already one would think that his Herculean labors would crush him. However, at this time he was passing on to the prime of life, and his strong physique showed no signs of overwork. Wherever his young men went to preach, there came requests for him to publish a weekly Christian paper, that all might have access to his profound knowledge. Having his splendid college buildings not only paid for, but well endowed at that time, also having a splendid faculty and a very choice body of students and the

churches at home and abroad in a flourishing condition—not only self-sustaining, but themselves reaching out and establishing new missions all the time—and absolute peace and harmony prevailing throughout, he thought that was the time to start the paper, which he did, and called it “The Christian.”

CHAPTER VII.

When Fairplay would contemplate the man, the wonderful work he had accomplished and was accomplishing, then to think that Worthy's name had never appeared upon a programme—ministerial, county, district, State, or national—he would almost go wild. Having decided fully that it was jealousy, puerility, and meanness on the part of the preachers in his own State, and possibly all the States, he resolved to rise above even State conventions and take Worthy's name to the national convention, where such jealousies, and especially political trickery, even if it should be in some hearts, would not be allowed to come to the surface. He mentioned his purpose to Elders Cheer, Trust, and Happy. They all said: "It looks reasonable, sounds plausible, and we think that something of the kind ought to be done if possible, in order to show not only our own, but the whole church's, appreciation of Worthy's indefatigable labors."

They were certain in their own minds that the entire church—except some preachers there and elsewhere, who had, through their worldly ambition and baseness, forced themselves into high society positions—would heartily indorse Philip Worthy's work at Outway.

These brethren had been just a little skeptical about Fairplay's previous plans of introduction, and hence gave him little or no encouragement. They had not really opposed his plans; but they had not encouraged him, which was about the same. But now, encouraged by their expressions of confidence, Fairplay was on fire and could scarcely wait to get

to the national programme committee. He never mentioned the episode with Trusty, the State secretary, to Philip. His failure was so complete that he could not, by any process of reasoning, see how it would benefit him in any way whatever. So he, without communicating this effort to Philip, went to the national programme committee. He went, feeling that his effort would work for good in two ways—namely, it would greatly encourage Philip Worthy by giving him the prominence due him, announce his work, and thereby greatly enlarge the same; and, better still, it would give those smaller convention preachers, who are arrogance personified, a rebuke that would take the conceit out of them and make them feel their nothingness as never before.

With his whole nature thrilling through and through with such thoughts and with all possible overconfidence, Fairplay appeared in the presence of the committee.

“Brethren,” said Fairplay, “ordinarily I would simply be overwhelmed with embarrassment to appear before so honorable a body, for I am not at all accustomed to public speaking; but at this time the justice of my cause and the absolute certainty of success overcomes my embarrassment, for I stand before you to speak out of the great abundance of my heart. I know that you brethren must be well known throughout the entire brotherhood for your superior piety, wisdom, and judgment; otherwise you never would have been selected to fill the stations you now occupy. I know that a great deal depends upon the actions of this committee. The interests of the entire church are at stake. Realizing, as I do, the great responsibilities resting upon you, and also knowing that any persons in your position, whatever their wisdom and ability, would need all the suggestions and help possible—indeed, it would be a mark of your wisdom to so-

licit suggestions—I thought that I would come, unsolicited, and contribute my mite. No; it is more than a mite to your assistance. I say ‘more than a mite’ because I believe that I have as prominent a feature to suggest as ever appeared on any programme in the world. Knowing that we would have present at these great national conventions the greatest scholars—literary, scientific, philosophical—besides the most honorable, the mayor of the city in which the convention is held, the Governor of the State, and possibly the President of the United States or some crowned head, it would be absolutely necessary to have the brightest, most brilliant, as well as the best of men, to constitute such programmes; otherwise the demands would not be met, and our cause would, in a measure at least, be prostrated. Now to, with absolute and unerring certainty, avoid such a calamity (I was about to say ‘catastrophe’), I have a name to suggest to this honorable committee that will within itself insure the success of the convention, even if every other name on the programme should be a failure—a name that will give the church dignity, standing, and great prestige throughout this country and every other country that happens to have representatives at the convention or whose people happen to read the great address that he whose name I have come to suggest to the committee shall deliver on that occasion; for he shines forth as a bright and brilliant star in the intellectual and religious heavens. I mean Philip Worthy, of Outway.”

During this eloquent and impassioned tribute to his friend, Worthy, a multitude of thoughts were passing before Fairplay’s mind in bold relief—namely, not only Philip’s great address itself, but a probable outline of the same; not only the effect of the address upon the great audience, but its effect upon those arrogant programme preachers from the

various States, and especially upon those from his own State and his immediate part of the State. He, in his anticipation, could just see them sitting around, with chagrin and shamefacedness and heads down almost between their knees. As when he appeared before his own State secretary, such a thought as their knowing all about Worthy, and especially objecting to him, had never entered into his mind, so he was wholly unprepared for their reply.

One thinks strange that Fairplay did not think of the bare possibility of such a thing after his experience with the ministerial association, his home church, and the State secretary; but while he knew that there was something vitally wrong somewhere, he had rather had the idea that it was the abuse of the organizations by the designing preachers of the various States, till his eyes were opened through contact with them that the organizations themselves were wrong, unscriptural, and divisive. Notwithstanding this fact, he still had an idea that the national committee, board, and convention would be far above the grovelings and trickery of the States and communities.

Fairplay was speechless and almost paralyzed when Thomas Upman, chairman of the committee, said: "Brother Fairplay, did you not know that not only Worthy's name, but your own, as well as all the other discordant brethren in your part of the country, are perfectly familiar to every one of us?"

" 'Discordant brethren!' " exclaimed Fairplay. " 'Discordant brethren!' Why do you call us all, including Philip Worthy, 'discordant?' " "

"Well," answered Upman, "you are all out of line with the brotherhood."

"What do you mean by being 'out of line with the brotherhood?' " said Fairplay.

"I mean," said Upman, "that you do not believe in instrumental music in the churches, a Sunday school (with officers and the regular Sunday-school literature), the Christian Endeavor Society, the Christian Woman's Board of Missions, missionary societies, or any of the approved methods of doing church work."

"Show me a syllable of scripture authority for one single thing that you have mentioned," said Fairplay.

"We don't have to have any scripture authority," said Upman; "sanctified common sense will suggest it."

"You admit," said Fairplay, "that you have inaugurated a system of working for which you have no scripture authority, and then proceed to denounce as 'discordant' those who do not, without a murmur, surrender themselves—body, soul, spirit, conscience, time, talents, means, life, and all—to your system. 'Discordant' because they will not sacrifice or exchange the law of the Lord for a human system! If you can convince me that wrong is right, if you can convince me that man is greater than God, then, but not till then, will I believe that human law is above the divine law; then, but not till then, will I cease to be 'discordant' and will surrender all to your human system. Unless you do that, I will live in opposition to any system that makes void the law of the Lord; that lays the most faithful, conscientious, and efficient men upon the shelf, long before their work is done, and invites the ambitious, unscrupulous, and designing to the front and to the high and most responsible places—a system that will lift young men, many of whom cannot even control themselves, into positions where they can, and actually do, 'lord it over' all the elders of the various congregations in the district over which they preside."

"You talk about the elders," said Upman. "Just look at

your elders all over the country—old-fogy back numbers! What if the preachers should leave the government of the churches to such men; what would become of them? Why, you know as well as I do that they would never make any progress; for when they call preachers, they would select men not a whit above themselves, and then they would just slide along in the same old rut forever. They would refuse at all times to adopt any of the approved methods of church work, simply because they could not find a ‘thus saith the Lord’ in approved precept or example; and thereby they and their congregations would forever remain discordant elements, like Worthy and all his kind. So that the preachers are compelled to take the matter in hand.”

“When I came to you,” said Fairplay, “I thought that I was coming to a high and an honorable body—one that was as high above the groveling, political tricksters of the States, districts, etc., as the heavens are higher than the earth. I thought by my experience with them that I had seen all the corruption extant; but as the State secretary not only reminded me of John Dodger, but used the same rotten arguments, and almost the same words, as Dodger in defense of their human system, so now you do the same thing. I want to say to you that now, for the first time in all my life, I realize that there is no difference. I have now been through the entire mill. I have run the gantlet, from the preachers’ association to the national committee, and I know from actual experience and observation that your system would sink into oblivion everybody and everything that would dare oppose or raise a dissenting voice. So all the hope that I ever had has been blasted. The only thing that we can do is to ‘contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.’ So I will go back; and we will all renew

our determination, draw the armor of God closer about us, and walk with a firmer step than ever before;" and, with but little ceremony, he started for home.

Upon Fairplay's return, he called Elders Cheer, Trust, and Happy together and said: "Brethren, I never was more surprised and more sorely disappointed in my life. You yourselves know that I never opposed boards, as such, in my life till I had my experience with the preachers' association and the State secretary. I had always looked upon them as matters of opinion, to be adopted or let alone as people saw fit; for they were not commanded of the Lord. Even after my experience with Secretary Trusty, the thought that the boards themselves were wrong did not enter my mind; the real thought in my mind was that it was a good thing in bad hands, and that if I could ever see the same in good hands, it would be all right. This I fully expected to see in the national committee; but you can imagine how completely my hopes were blasted when I found the members of that committee the same kind of groveling, political tricksters as Dodger, Trusty, and all the rest. I thought when I started out here I was beginning at the bottom and going toward the top; but, brethren, after my experience all along the line, I see that the thing has no top or bottom—that everything pertaining to this system is on an absolute level. Why, if Thomas Upman had stood behind a curtain when he talked and there had been no difference in the tone of voice, as I said of Henry Trusty, I would have testified on oath that it was John Dodger talking. Everybody, from John Dodger to Thomas Upman, talks exactly alike. They all seem to have the entire list of missionary words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and even addresses, as slick as an otter slide. They must have a mill somewhere, where they grind out all

of this so-called 'missionary material,' and from which mill at least sermon outlines are sent out to the preachers all over the country; for I know that they would not all just happen to put forth exactly the same silly, sickening, and unscriptural positions and worldly systems. No, my brethren, there is no hope anywhere. If their system is not wrong, it is always in bad hands, which amounts to the same thing. But now I am convinced, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that, if the Bible be true, their system is false, and that the right thing for us to do is to 'contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.' "

To this they all agreed; and from that moment henceforth they never expected a particle of sympathy, aid, or comfort from the societies.

James Fairplay communicated his experience to Philip Worthy and said: "We have concluded that if we could not get a place on any of their programmes for the best, most able, and most successful man in the brotherhood, we could not hope for any one else. We have concluded, further, that the whole system is wrong, because it is human; that henceforth we are 'determined to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified,' and to teach the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible; that where the Bible speaks, we will speak; and where the Bible is silent, we will be silent."

Philip responded: "Of course in your reference to me I feel that you greatly overestimate me; for I have never thought of comparing myself to my brethren at all, much less in that way. Paul says: 'To compare yourselves with yourselves or among yourselves is not wise.' I feel very kindly to you, Brother Fairplay, for the many faithful and determined efforts that you have made in my behalf; but if you had conferred with me, I could have saved you the trou-

ble, for I tested all those things before I entered upon my life work proper. I saw that their system was purely human; and hence their advocates would necessarily be arbitrary, tyrannical, and oppressive toward all who differed from them. For that very reason I could not conscientiously work with them; and to avoid an early conflict, I located here at Outway, far from their influence—not that I thought for a moment that their influence would never reach here, but that I might possibly succeed in getting the Bible plan sufficiently established, so that it would continue to stand in spite of the societies' influence when they did come. I was not at all surprised when you wrote me that they had their agencies at work to dislodge me. I knew that if they did not already have them at work, they would some time. But especially am I gratified to learn that you have determined, without any reservation, mental or otherwise, to abide God's way of doing everything. Be true to this resolution, and 'God will open the windows of heaven and pour out such blessings upon you as you will not be able to receive,' is my faith.

“Your brother in Christ and in the hope of heaven,

“PHILIP WORTHY.”

CHAPTER VIII.

After Fairplay left, Thomas Upman, chairman of the national programme committee, said to the other members: "You can see plainly that something will have to be done to crush that man, Worthy; for his work at Outway is assuming too great proportions. That he has been doing, and is doing, a wonderful work, we cannot deny; that he is doing all in exact accordance with the word of God, we cannot deny; but because he does nothing except by positive precept or example from the New Testament, he insists that we should do the same thing. There is where he is wrong; there is where he and his school, paper, books (written by him), churches (at home and abroad)—and, indeed, all who come under his influence—hurt the work of these splendid missionary societies which 'sanctified common sense' has suggested as an addition to those mentioned in the Bible. True, as it is said of Worthy, he seldom, if ever, refers to our human organizations, either privately or publicly; but the fact that he does not in any way participate in these approved methods of working bespeaks his opposition to us in the most telling way, and his never referring to us at all only emphasizes his opposition to us. If he would talk against us or pay any attention to us in any way, it would give us an opportunity to at least misrepresent him, and thereby build up prejudice against him, if nothing more; but as it is, there he and his work stand like a magnificent mountain raising its majestic head higher and higher every year. We need

not talk about meeting him face to face in an open fight. Did you ever see him?"

"No," said the other members of the committee.

"Well," said Thomas Upman, "you just ought to see him. He is the most magnificent specimen of our race upon the face of the earth. Some one has said: 'He could *look* better than most men can preach or speak.' He is large, intellectual, humble, and the most eloquent and powerful man who ever addressed an audience. Fairplay's eulogy upon him was not at all overdrawn. But for that very reason it is absolutely necessary for us to do something to curtail his influence, for he will injure us more and more as the years go by. I want to suggest to you what I have had in mind for some time and see what you think about it. It is this: At the coming convention we will call a few of the leaders together early and suggest to them that the only way to 'down' Philip Worthy is to hold the next great national convention at his place. I know that the place is rather out of the way, as the name 'Outway' would suggest; and not only so, but that we will have to improvise or rent some good place in which to hold the convention; and hence it will, in all probability, make it the most expensive convention ever held among us. But, still, I think it will be money well expended; for such a convention, with the very best programme possible, would eclipse, overshadow, and crush him and his work."

"Good!" said the other members of the committee. "If anything on earth will crush him, that will. How did you happen to think of the plan?"

"Well," said Upman, "I have thought and prayed over the matter by day and by night, till finally, as if by inspiration, the plan rushed into my mind."

They all agreed that they were certain that the plan would meet the hearty approval of the entire convention; that it would work like a charm; and that Worthy and his work at Outway could only be read about after the great convention. So, with this plan burning in their minds and hearts, they proceeded to prepare the programme for the intervening convention.

This plan was mentioned to the proper ones the first day of the next convention, before any other place should be suggested for the following convention; and there was not a dissenting voice—no, not a discordant note—on the subject; but, rather, for the suggestion of this plan, Thomas Upman was almost lionized by all during the entire convention. All seemed to have looked upon him as a prodigy or a genius. The sisters agreed pretty generally that he had a touch of inspiration. Anyway, when knotty questions came up in the convention, they would always refer them to Thomas Upman, reasoning that any one who could solve the problem of getting rid of Worthy could solve the lesser questions that might arise in a convention. If he should miss the proper solution a thousand miles, they would receive it, taking it for granted that it was right; for they felt that if he could not get it right, no one else could.

It may be said that the wave of enthusiasm over the prospective convention at Outway interfered somewhat with the present convention, for how to “down” Philip Worthy had been burdening their hearts for years; but now as this great burden had been lifted, of course they would all naturally gather about and give more attention to Thomas Upman, who had lifted the burden, than they would give to the convention programme itself. Such a thought as the plan’s miscarrying never once entered any of their minds.

Of course, Thomas Upman was also made the chairman of the next programme committee; for they did not feel that there was another man in the convention who was capable of preparing a programme so important as the Outway programme would necessarily have to be in order to accomplish the great work of "downing" Worthy and destroying his work.

At the proper time John Dodger, of Conway, arose and said: "Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as there is no excellence without labor, there should be no excellent labor without reward or honor of some kind. Now, Philip Worthy is a great and good man and has done a wonderful work at Outway and elsewhere, and we cannot deny it. Hence the exceeding great difficulty of dislodging him. Sister Inroad, who did the supplanting stunt so beautifully at Conway, has been at work on Worthy's case for years and has had many able assistants; but Brother Thomas Upman has done what they all could not do—thought of a plan that will do the work. I know, and so does every one know who has ever worked on the case, that the plan represents much labor, meditation, prayer, if not fasting, on Brother Upman's part, and that he should, therefore, be honored for the same. I, therefore, nominate him for chairman of that which promises to be the greatest and most memorable convention that ever has been, or possibly ever will be, held by our people, on account of the wonderful work to be accomplished. It is not probable that any other convention will ever be called upon to do a similar work, for I doubt whether this country ever produces another man capable of doing the work and exerting the influence that Worthy has exerted. I refer to our next convention to be held at Outway."

"I second the motion!" yelled fifty, a hundred, and some guessed it at a thousand.

"Any remarks?" asked the chairman.

"Question!" was upon every tongue.

"All in favor say, 'I,'" said the chairman.

"I," said the whole convention, with an emphasis that almost raised the roof.

For the next hour the chairman lost control of the present convention entirely, for the thousands present took this opportunity to extend congratulations to Upman.

There never was as much thought, money, time, and energy spent in preparation for any convention as there was the next twelve months for the one to be held at Outway.

Upman decided at once that he would not have a single one upon that programme but what was known as a star speaker and thinker—not only among the brethren, but throughout the country. He did not confine himself strictly to his own brethren. That he might catch prominent denominational ears, he put Rev. (?) Starshoot on the programme; and to attract many of the worldly wise, Professor Shiner's name also appeared on the programme.

This programme was submitted to many competent judges before publication; and all, without a single exception, said that it presented the finest array of talent and covered the widest range of thought of any programme they had ever seen. This, of course, might have been true or it might not; but the fact that Upman had prepared it was sufficient within itself to make them think so. With this encouragement, they proceeded very early to have thousands of the programmes printed in the most attractive form possible; and as the time for the convention drew near, the announcements of the place and time were made more frequent and numerous, until im-

mediately preceding the convention the whole country was literally flooded with announcements and programmes. The announcement of time and place, together with the entire programme, was to be seen in all their own papers and in all the leading denominational papers in the country, besides the leading secular papers. The denominational editors were glad to make the announcement. They were about as anxious to get rid of Worthy as the others were; for he had, through pure teaching and pure, Christian living, compelled those at Outway to teach and practice almost exactly as he did to keep their members from going to him. In the stores, offices of all kinds, hotels, and railroad stations could be seen such announcements as these: "Remember the convention at Outway at a certain time;" "All roads lead to Outway;" etc. They had succeeded in getting special rates on all the railroads and entertainment for thousands while at Outway.

When James Fairplay began to read the announcements, he became almost frantic; for from his own personal experience with them, from local to national, he was enabled to read the interpretation of all this between their own lines—that is, it was to eclipse Worthy through sheer force of numbers and show. So, fearing that his good friend and brother, through lack of experience, would not understand it, he boarded a train and went to see the great and good man.

"Brother Worthy," said Fairplay, "they are bringing that national convention here for no other purpose in the world than to try to eclipse you and destroy your work. They think that by bringing it right to your door and among the members of the various congregations here and vicinity, many, and especially the young and lesser informed members, will be carried away with the glitter, glare, and enthusiasm of the convention; so that they will never again be

satisfied with the plain, simple, New Testament way of doing things. I tell you, it is meanness personified; and I have a great notion to just plant my batteries right here, whence I can open up on this convention, from the very first session to the last, with my big guns, which my experience with them compelled me to forge and load. I was afraid, Brother Worthy, that you would not understand all this; hence I came to give you the inside track and to indicate my purpose to you."

"Now, I thank you very kindly," said Worthy; "but I presume that I know more about these things than you think I do. I know from my own experience and observation that you are exactly right in your interpretation of this convention at this place; but my experience teaches me that the best way—and, indeed, the only right and effective way—to oppose error of any kind is to teach the word of God in its absolute purity, and at the same time make our own lives living and continuous illustrations of the sacred and solemn lessons that we learn from the word of God, and strive at all times to manifest the spirit of Christ, even in the face of the greatest possible opposition. Of course this great convention will, no doubt, sidetrack many of our members and enable them to organize a congregation here of impulsive or ill-informed members from the various congregations. Members who are disposed to take their feelings as their guide will naturally be carried away with the enthusiasm of such a convention; but, Brother Fairplay, if we have done our whole duty hitherto and will continue to do so, who will be responsible for their going off? Certainly we will not. I expect to go right on with my work, the same as if there was not a convention in the town. I shall not in any way encourage the convention, but shall continue at my work and try to

prevail upon all with whom I come in contact to do the same. That will throw the whole responsibility upon the convention people."

"That is exactly right," said Fairplay; "but, then, you know I am of such an impulsive nature and have seen so much of their trickery that I just feel like opening up on them. But yours is the wiser plan, and I shall suppress my feelings and follow your suggestion."

Several days before the convention was to begin, the delegates began to arrive, and every day more and more, till finally the locals, overlands and all, came crowded to the limit; and thus they continued till the city was almost overrun. Of course, almost all came ostensibly to attend the great convention, hear the great speeches, and receive the general enthusiasm and spiritual uplift of the great meeting; but deep down in their hearts they wanted, first of all, to get a good, square look at the good man, Worthy, before his destruction by the convention. How they could do this without giving themselves and the whole scheme away was the question with a great many.

The mammoth convention hall was crowded almost to suffocation at the first session; and if there ever was a small dog in high rye, it was Thomas Upman, chairman of the convention. He hardly looked like Thomas; he looked taller, larger, smarter, and greater in every way. And, by the way, he made a good chairman, if I do say it myself. If he only had a thousandth part of the knowledge of, and regard for, the word of God that he had for Roberts' "Rules of Order," he might have been a probable coworker with, if not a successor to, Philip Worthy himself; but—alas!—among the first persons he looked for when he arose was Philip Worthy; and, of course, he expected to feel somewhat embarrassed,

looking into the face of the good man whom he was there to destroy. But imagine his relief when he saw that he was not there at all. The convention opened with the grandest music Outway ever heard. Then, after the opening prayer by Rev. (?) Boomer and a few remarks by the chairman—which was a happy unction of that brilliant inaugural address which he had been a year in preparing and which he was to deliver a day or two later—they entered upon the convention work proper. It would not be possible for me to report all the grand and eloquent things that were said on this occasion, even if I had the time and space. One had to be present to appreciate it properly. Yes; they discussed science, philosophy, higher criticism, the æsthetic in religion, etc.; they had lectures on missions, Christian Woman's Board of Missions work, Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor work, Sunday-school work, popular lectures, concerts, etc.; and all the men and women who spoke showed that they had, by native ability, hard work, and profound research, mastered their themes. All, without a single exception, carried the great audience right with them. Every feature of the convention more than met the expectation of all.

When the Lord's day came, all the denominational pulpits were occupied by preachers from the convention. Of course they never asked the privilege of preaching in any of the churches of Christ; for, on account of their impure motives in coming there, they were afraid of their very shadows, lest they should be suspected. One noteworthy fact was that in all their convention work and Lord's-day preaching not a single reference was made to Philip Worthy or his way of working, for they knew that that would be a dead "give away" to them; but some one went to the editor of a little sensational sheet, who came out with extra issues, and, un-

der large headlines, pretended to show up the difference between the broad, liberal convention people and the narrow, illiberal anticonvention people, hoping thereby to provoke Worthy or some of the leading members to take it up; but not a word was heard from any source whatever. Still, through this miserable editor the convention people did their utmost to belittle the work of the churches of Christ there by contrasting it with the great work of the convention.

In the convention they talked a great deal about the beautiful harmony, and to all appearances there was harmony; but when you remember that the audience was composed of people from all denominations and people of no denomination and that there were some of their own, some denominational, and some of no church on the programme, the question would naturally arise: How could perfect harmony prevail under such circumstances? The only answer to the question is: By either confining themselves to themes outside of the Bible or by suppressing those parts of the Bible that constitute the points of difference between them and the denominations—if, indeed, such points still exist at all; and, as a matter of fact, no one heard a word in the convention that would in any way cross his sectarian or skeptical views—or in the churches, either, as to that matter.

To look around and see the great convention hall crowded to suffocation; to go to the churches and find them the same way—the parks, hotels, and even the very streets, full of convention people—one would be made to wonder what had become of Worthy and his people; for at the time they seemed to be completely lost sight of.

Thomas Upman was in ecstasies all the time; for, from the appearance of things, he had every reason to believe that he

was even more than measuring up to the reputation that he had made.

It was one of the most deceptive conventions ever held; for as the main electric tower and the many lesser lights are almost entirely shut out from view by the heavy fog, but when the fog disappears, the lights not only reappear, but seem to shine brighter because of the fog's having come and gone, so, for the time being, the light of Philip Worthy and that of his brethren was almost completely shut out by the numbers, enthusiasm, glitter, and glare of the great convention; but when the convention is over, as we shall see, he shines like a star in the religious heavens—the brighter because of the darkness of opposition and persecution through which he had passed.

CHAPTER IX.

The convention was to continue for eight days, and for five or six days the convention people seemed to have it all their own way and carry everything before them; but from that time on they began to hear and feel some opposition. People of the various denominational churches and of no church began to ask why the name of the great and good man, Worthy, did not appear upon the programme. They went to Worthy every day and every hour in the day to know why his name was not on the programme.

"They do not want my name on the programme," said Worthy.

"Why not?" they asked. "Did you not invite the convention to Outway?"

"I did not," answered Worthy.

"Did not some of your people invite it?" they said.

"They did not," said Worthy.

"You do not mean to tell us that they voluntarily forced themselves upon you after this fashion?" they said.

"They did," said he.

James Fairplay, who had been quiet for some time, could keep quiet no longer. He said: "They are nothing but a lot of political tricksters and sneak thieves, who have come here for no other purpose than to steal the congregations established by Brother Worthy and those working with him; and, of course, they do not want his name on the programme."

Mr. Honorbright, minister of the —— Church, who had been spokesman for those who had come to see Worthy, at

that time said—and with a good deal of feeling, too: “Brother Fairplay, you are exactly right. I begin to see it now; I begin to see why they have Brother Starshoot’s name on the programme. It is for no other purpose than to deceive the people of the various other churches. They put Professor Shiner, that old skeptic, on the programme to attract the worldly wise. For this reason I am determined—so help me God!—to get Brother Worthy before that convention ere it closes. Brother Worthy, while you know that we have all opposed you, more or less, because you have made inroads upon our congregations constantly till you have almost absorbed some of them; that the farther we were from you and your influence, the more we prospered numerically, and that the nearer we were to you and your influence, the less we prospered—notwithstanding all this, you know that we all loved and honored you; and we do not propose to allow people to come and treat you after this fashion right in our midst. With the record you have made among us, we all feel honored at your presence, and greatly prefer you to those ‘sneak thieves,’ as Brother Fairplay calls them, if you do make inroads upon us, or even absorb us all.”

So Honorbright started out with a petition, which was signed by judges, doctors, lawyers, preachers, clubs, prayer meetings, Sunday schools, and churches. He then appeared before the convention managers and presented the petition for Worthy to have the closing speech of the convention.

“I am very sorry that things have taken this turn,” said Rev. (?) Smoothly, chairman of the honorable committee on programme. “We never thought of Brother Worthy’s wanting a place on the programme, or we certainly would have given him a place. But this evening is the last session of the convention; and in order to hold all the people for

this last session, we have reserved some of our very best speakers (Professor Shiner and others) for this evening, and I just do not see how we can change it."

"Well," said Honorbright, "if you do not set this evening apart for Worthy, you will have to do a great deal worse, for this city will give this convention such a rebuke at the time and such a write-up later that you will all be afraid to go into a convention again."

"Well," said Smoothly, "I will see what we can do."

After Honorbright retired, the chairman said to the committee: "I have been hearing for the last two or three days that our motives in bringing this convention to this place have been suspected, but had no idea that it had assumed so stubborn a form; but now you can all see that the great wave of indignation from all over the city, representing every phase of society, of which Honorbright's determined face and unequivocal words were only a forecast, cannot be thrown back, turned aside, stopped, or even checked. The only way under heaven that we can possibly do is to unceremoniously stand aside and let the awful flood roll by."

To this they all had to agree, however adverse their wishes. They hurried around and called together all the schemers and wire pullers who were responsible for the presence of the convention at Outway, to see what could be done.

"Brethren," said Smoothly, "I have been in the vanguard of societyism for many years, and no doubt we have gone too far many a time; but never before did I get into a place where I could not find a way to quiet the disturbed and injured or some way to slip out. If in no other way, we have succeeded in crushing the opposition through sheer ponderosity, as we aimed to do this time; but here we have utterly failed. The whole city—'antis,' sectarians, and the world—

has suspected our motives. I do not know how they ever did it, but they certainly have. They are asking everywhere why Worthy's name is not on the programme. Fairplay told them that we did not want him on our programme; that we were a lot of political tricksters; that we had brought the convention here to crush Worthy and steal the congregations that he and his people have established. The whole city believes it, too. Why, Honorbright, pastor of the —— Church, says: 'The reason they put Starshoot among their speakers was not because they cared anything for him or his doctrine, but to deceive and draw them into the convention. Then,' said he, 'think of the sermons they delivered in our pulpits! Elsewhere they score and denounce us as sectarians; they oppose, burlesque, ridicule, and make fun of many of our teachings and practices; and when they are in our pulpits and want our patronage, they are as sweet as sugar and as good as pie.' Again, he said: 'Why did they have Professor Shiner, that old skeptic, on the programme? Simply to draw the crowds, especially the worldly-wise.' And," said Smoothly, "the worst of it is that we all know he is right about it; and our hearts condemning us, we have no strength left with which to combat opposition. The whole community, including the people of the denominations, know that Worthy is a grand, good man. The sectarians say: 'Of course, Worthy differs from us; but he does not do it by trickery, burlesque, or anything like that, but by faithfully and conscientiously teaching the Bible as he understands it, and then making his life an illustration of what he believes the Bible to teach. We have thought that we would like to get rid of him—not because we thought he was dishonest, but that our own churches might grow; but now, since we see him passing through this awful fire of injustice and perse-

cution, without the smell of fire on his religious garment, we say: Give him to us in preference to any of these sneaks who are trying to put his light out, who are good to our faces, but who will resort to any scheme, even to misrepresentation, to stab us or their own brethren (who follow not after them) in the back. Let him make inroads upon us; still, we prefer him to any living man.' And," continued Smoothly, "here is this petition—signed by judges, doctors, lawyers, clubs, churches, etc.—demanding that we give Worthy the time for the closing session of the convention. This was presented to the committee by Honorbright. I protested at the time, saying that it would be an utter impossibility to make any change now, for the reason that it was the last session, and, in order to hold all the people attending the convention for this session, we had reserved our very best speakers for this time; that as these speakers (Shiner and Starshoot) were not of our church, it would simply be impossible to dispense with their part of the programme. 'Well,' said Honorbright, 'if you do not set this evening apart for Worthy, you will have to do a great deal worse, for this city will give this convention such a rebuke at the time and such a write-up later that you will all be afraid to go into a convention again.' And, as I said to the committee then, so say I to you now, that they have not only suspected, but thoroughly understand, our motives in bringing the convention to Outway; that the great storm of indignation, of which Honorbright's determined face and unequivocal words were only a forecast, cannot be turned back, set aside, stopped, or even checked; and that the only way under heaven for us to do is to just unceremoniously stand aside and let the great storm pass. Let us hear from some of the rest of you."

Thomas Upman, chairman of the convention, was the first

to respond. He said: "It is simply too bad for the 'antis' to interfere with this glorious work of the Lord in this way."

"But," said Smoothly, "It is not the 'antis;' it is the whole city and community; and I am not right certain that it is not the Lord himself rebuking us through them, for we all know that we agreed to suppress our motives in coming to Outway and that these people are right in their charges against us. If we had been prompted by pure motives and their charges were all false, it would not lessen the problem before us; for, right or wrong, this great flood of indignation is upon us, and we have to get out of the way the best we can. We have already waited till, while we may, by exercising the greatest possible haste, escape the main current of indignation, we may as well prepare for some hard lashings by its limits."

"There is no doubt," said Upman, "but that what you say is true, and that if we refuse to do anything we will encounter the main current instead of the limits. It is terrible to contemplate from any standpoint; and I want to say right here that I feel more responsible for the present condition of things than any one else, for I conceived the plan. I just do not know what kind of a spell the devil had me under at that time—or you all, either; for you went wild over the scheme, lauded me to the sky, and honored me by making me chairman of this convention. While I am on the floor, I want to say, further, that my own conscience is giving me all I can stand; and if you men pile it upon me too high, I will never have anything to do with another convention while I live."

"Well," said Peter Bold, another member of the committee, "while our motives have been suspected, our plans have been discovered, and we cannot possibly escape exposure, let

us not play the 'baby act,' but keep a 'stiff upper lip' and face the music. Remember that Outway is not the only city in the United States; that if our influence should be forever destroyed in Outway, we can get in our work in other parts; and that the severe castigation that we are to get here will serve to make us more cautious in the future and cause us to lay our plans a little deeper."

This timely speech from Bold stiffened all their backbones materially, as well as hardened their consciences. So they decided to call Shiner and Starshoot, the speakers for the evening, before them and tell them their predicament—of course, smoothing it over the best they could. When they did this, the speakers' suavity compelled them to say: "Most certainly it is all right with us. We sympathize with you."

They then all retired to their stopping places, and, with abated breath, awaited for what they thought to be the awful catastrophe that evening; and it is reasonable to suppose that they were not far wrong in their characterization of the prospective evening meeting.

The preachers of the various denominational churches and the leaders of the various societies and organizations, anticipating that the convention managers would be compelled to honor their mammoth petition, took the liberty of announcing at their various places that they would dispense with the evening services and all go to the convention to hear Philip Worthy.

Long before the hour of service arrived, people began to pour in from the east, west, north, and south—on foot, in buggies, in carriages, on street cars—till the immense convention hall, which was never known to be entirely full before, was full to suffocation, and hundreds of people (many of them delegates from long distances) could not possibly get

in. Perhaps there never has been, and never will be, a more expectant audience assembled on the face of the earth; and no speaker's appearance ever produced a more profound impression upon an audience than Philip Worthy's did at this time. For the first time in all his life was the lion plainly to be seen back of his mild, but most determined, face. While he stood for a few moments without saying a word, the great audience, beholding his magnificent physique, intellectual forehead, intelligent face, and most piercing eyes, was so filled with admiration and emotion that many, remembering how he had been treated, were seen to actually weep. Finally the spell was broken by as clear, distinct, and magnetic a voice as was ever heard; and, taking into consideration the immense concourse of people, the fact that, without any apparent effort whatever on the speaker's part, he could be heard and *understood* by all present was a marvel to all. There was not a person present who did not feel that he was in the presence of a master.

Worthy began as follows: "Brothers and sisters in Christ, ladies, and gentlemen—I might have said 'Mr. Chairman;' but Thomas must have disappeared when he saw me coming, ran off somewhere and laid down, for you know that the Bible says: 'The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth.' Anyway, Thomas Upman, chairman of this convention, was not here on the platform to introduce me and explain to this great audience why this part of the regular convention programme was dispensed with; neither is he visible to me at this moment; but, my friends, you will always find men with wicked causes invincible in peace and invisible in war.

"Now, I propose to make many challenges from Bible standpoints; and you will see that all those who have made this convention possible are, or will be, invisible, so far as

accepting the challenges are concerned. In the absence of opponents fully capable of showing the falsity of their positions, the erroneousness of their teachings, and the trickery of their plans, they become bold, defiant, and invincible. In all the history of the world an abuse of anything had to become, indeed, awfully bad before it would provoke sufficient sentiment to rise up and rebuke it. On no other principle could I have been induced to appear on this occasion. We have all, without one single exception, agreed to speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where the Bible is silent; we have all agreed to take the Bible as our exclusive rule of faith and practice. Again, we are told that 'if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.' Now it is apparent to every observant person that, for some cause, we are not united and that there is a lack of fellowship among us, which is positive evidence that you, we, or both are speaking where the Bible is silent, keeping silent where the Bible speaks, or that some of us or all of us are walking, in a measure at least, in darkness. Hence there is a lack of fellowship among us. Who are responsible for this lack of fellowship? When I first entered the ministry, I attended your conventions till I was convinced beyond the possibility of a doubt that you were not only wrong in many of your practices, but that societyism itself is wrong, antisciptural, and hence divisive. I saw the impatient, arbitrary, tyrannical, and oppressive spirit of the prime movers of societyism and the general disposition on the part of almost all to sink into utter oblivion those who dared to differ from them in any way and who would not just fall down before them and say: 'Here we are, heart and hand, soul and body, life and spirit. Now just take complete possession of us and all that we have and are, and use

us when, where, and how you think proper.' For that very reason I came away off up here to Outway—not that I did not know that you would be along after a while, but with the hope that we could get the work so firmly established and the hearts of the people so stored with the word of God and the Lord's way of doing things that there would be no room for societyism in their minds when you did come. This we tried to do, not by abusing societyism, but by doing what you all agreed to do—namely, speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where the Bible is silent—in other words, teach the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. But as Saul of Tarsus, when he was wrong and before he was converted, persecuted those who were doing right even unto Damascus, a strange city, so you, not having a syllable of Bible authority for your societyism, have become so exceedingly mad against those who—not by word, but by their actions—object to your man-made way of carrying on the Lord's work that you have, with your national convention, pursued them even unto Outway, this strange city to societyism; and from every appearance you were as determined to either place us in society prisons here or take us all with you bound to your society capital as Saul was to either imprison the disciples at Damascus or bring them bound to Jerusalem.

“You have gone too far—indeed, so far that our denominational friends, and even those of no church affiliation, have risen up against you—not for the teachings of the church of Christ, for they hear those from our brethren here all the time and in the strongest possible way, because here they hear them in their purity, and hence in a way that has made great inroads upon their memberships. Yet these are the very people who have brought about this severe rebuke for what you are doing and what we are not doing. Now,

what is that? Whatever it is, it is not to be found in the word of God; for, as I have already said, they hear all that *by us*; and still they have never seen proper to rebuke us in this way. It is not your societyism, either, for which they rebuke you; for you know that the denominations have all that themselves, and hence do not object to it at all. What is it, then, to which they object and for which they rebuke you? It is the impatient, intolerant, and arbitrary spirit that societyism has begotten in you. Now, while that is the thing for which they rebuke you, the real trouble (if they could only realize it) is back of that, of which this spirit is only the natural result—that is, the man-made societies themselves. You all find fault with me, say that I am not in good standing with the brethren, and place me on your ‘black list’ because I do not attend the preachers’ meetings and become a member of their association. Right here I want to issue my first challenge to every preacher present who advocates such an association and has sanctioned my name’s being placed on the ‘black list’ for not attending. The challenge is this: Give me Bible precept or example for such associations and many of the themes discussed, but especially some of the resolutions passed on such occasions, and I will give you my name as soon as you do it—and the initiation fee, too, if you charge any. I pause for a reply. Where are all my opponents who, in my absence, are trying to destroy my work and sink me into oblivion? Thomas Upman, where are you? Have you gone out, or are you in hiding somewhere within these walls? And where is Rev. (?) Smoothly, who was so busy a few hours ago? He has gone away somewhere, I presume. If Peter Bold, who stiffened the backs and upper lips of some of his convention brethren an hour or two ago, when their courage was about

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to fail them, is present, will he accept my challenge? No, indeed, my friends; for, as I said before, they are as invisible in the presence of an opponent and in the midst of war as they are invincible in the absence of an opponent or in time of peace. What is true of these present is just as true of those absent. There is not a man upon the face of the earth who even claims scripture precept or example for such ministerial associations, discussions, and resolutions as you now have. I want to ask you, then, if there is no scripture for them, who is responsible for the lack of fellowship between us at this point—we who abide the Scriptures, or you who go beyond the Scriptures? To ask the question is to answer it. When you disfellowship me and those who work with me because we will not consent to those things, you disfellowship us for not going beyond ‘that which is written.’ Exactly the same rule applies to the district, State, and national conventions. There is not a syllable of Bible authority for any of them.

“I would stop here to issue a second challenge; but, then, I know that it would simply be to waste time; for no one, present or absent, will accept the challenge. Besides, I want to call attention to some other things for the not doing of which you are determined to destroy, not only my influence, but that of all who do not do as you say.

“You do your utmost, by fair means and foul means, to lay me and those who agree with me upon the shelf for not having instrumental music in the churches. Right here I want to issue my second challenge. If there is one present who can show me New Testament precept or example for the use of instrumental music in the churches of Christ, we will introduce it into the churches in this part of the country next Lord’s day. Who will accept this challenge? I

again pause. Upman, Smoothly, Dodger, Trusty, does this position seem any easier to you than the former? No; you will not undertake it. All opponents are still invisible. If there is no New Testament authority for it, who, then, is responsible for our lack of fellowship at this point—you who go beyond ‘that which is written,’ or we who stop where the Scriptures stop? Again I say: To ask the question is to answer it. Anything whatever for which there is no scripture, to say the most of it, is only a matter of opinion; and who on earth has any right to disfellowship a brother on account of anything which is purely a matter of opinion? Certainly no one has such right.

“Again, you have turned your backs upon and your faces and hearts against me and all who take the Bible as a complete and perfect waybill from earth to heaven because we have no Young People’s Society of Christian Endeavor, no Christian Woman’s Board of Missions, or even a modern Sunday school, with all the supplies for the regular school, Christmas, Easter, and Children’s-day exercises. Because we do not, you are just as determined to destroy us and our work as Saul was to destroy the followers of Christ; and worse, for Saul was conscientious in what he did and verily thought that he was doing God’s service, hence did not scheme and trick and suppress his motives to carry out his purposes. He was open and above board in all he did; while you all know that you have no Bible authority for any of those things for which you condemn us for not having, and hence you cannot be conscientious and verily think that you are doing God’s service, especially in condemning us.

“If there is one present who disputes what I have said, I issue a third challenge: If you will give scripture precept or example for any of the things last mentioned, we

will introduce them into all our services next Lord's day. I pause again for some one to accept the challenge. Where are all those bold, defiant, and invincible men of a few hours ago? Invisible? Yes, invisible now, just as I told you they would be when they were wanted. Now, if there is lack of fellowship among us at this point, I ask: Who is responsible—you who go beyond 'that which is written,' or we who confine ourselves to 'that which is written,' as we all, you as well as we, agreed to do? Why, any intelligent jury on earth would say that those who failed to do what they agreed to do are responsible; that there never can be perfect harmony and fellowship among several parties to an agreement if one or more of the parties fail to live up to the agreement.

"Then, again, you disfellowship and ostracise all who absolutely refuse to fall in with you and adopt all the missionary machinery that you see proper to suggest; and because they do not, you resort to every scheme and trick imaginable to defeat—yea, suppress—them and their work. You know that after Brother Fairplay presented my name to the programme committee for the last national convention, you refused me a place; and after he was gone, you agreed among yourselves that you could not meet us in an open fight, for the very reason that I have been giving to-night—namely, you are all teaching and practicing some things not taught in the Bible; and those unwritten things are what we not only refuse to adopt, but oppose. That committee decided, further, that, inasmuch as you could not meet us in an open fight, the only way you could defeat our work here would be to do just as you have done—that is, bring the national convention to Outway—and thereby you could, without ever referring to us, overshadow and crush us. So it is useless and worse than a waste of time to issue a challenge for scrip-

ture authority for any of your missionary machinery beyond the local congregations as referred to in the Bible, for you have admitted as much in your councils.

“Last of all, you condemn us because we do not exchange pulpits with denominational preachers, go into union meetings with them, and fraternize with them generally. But did it never occur to you that they are not all simpletons; that they understand that your object in so doing is to make inroads upon them, and not because you think anything of them, their teachings, or their practices? Honorbright expressed the general sentiment among them when he said: ‘You will oppose them and burlesque, ridicule, and make fun of them and their ways till you want their patronage, and then you are as sweet as sugar and as good as pie.’ No; they suspect your motives in that, just as they have in your bringing this convention here; and hence they do not love, fear, or have any respect for you; and, to be honest with you, I cannot see how you can have any respect for yourselves.

“I want to say to my denominational friends who are here to-night: You now see that we do not oppose you, but the error incorporated in your systems of teaching; and we oppose error not only among you, but among our own brethren and everywhere it is taught. You have always given us credit for being honest, for teaching and at least trying to practice what we believe the Bible teaches; and for that very reason you love, honor, and even fear us—fear that because of our Bible teachings and honesty we would absorb your congregations. But I want to say to you in all candor to-night that you have all these society brethren at your mercy. For instance, if they ask you for your scripture authority for sprinkling, you just tell them that a large part of the chapter in which the account of preachers’ associations and dis-

trict, State, and national conventions are recorded is devoted to sprinkling; if they ask you where you find scripture precept or example for infant baptism, you tell them that they certainly ought to know that, for it is in the same chapter that gives them authority for Children's-day and Easter exercises; if they ask you for scripture authority for your creeds, you tell them that your creeds and the constitutions and by-laws of their own man-made societies are mentioned in very close connection; if they ask you where you get scripture authority for six months' probation, you tell them that the authority for six months' probation and the annual resignation of the elders and deacons are so closely connected that they are inseparable. If you do this, you will find that they will be as speechless as they have been here to-night; and if you should ever identify yourselves with them, you would not be free, for the truth alone will make you free. As I have always told you that you are bond servants of denominationalism and will never know what true freedom is till you throw off your denominationalism and take the Bible alone, to which every one who has done this will testify, so I say to my society brethren present and everywhere that you are bond servants of your societyism and will never know what true freedom is till you throw your societyism off and take the Bible alone for everything, to which all who have done this will testify.

“ Finally, I want to say that the worst feature of the whole system is that it hoists men—frequently young men who cannot control themselves, and sometimes designing men who do not try to control themselves—into positions where they can, and do, actually ‘lord it over’ the elders, not only of their home congregations, but all the congregations represented in the districts presided over by them; and, as Brother

Fairplay told your various programme committees, 'it lays many of the most honest and conscientious of our brethren upon the shelf—just at the age, too, when, because of their experience, they would be the most useful to the churches;' and all this simply because their consciences would not allow them to accept and adopt your man-made societies.

"You also have a system of intercommunication among the secretaries of the various human boards throughout the country, and you have encouraged these secretaries to form themselves into a kind of an information bureau to inquire into the character of every preacher in the land and sit in judgment upon the same. These secretaries, consciously or unconsciously, estimate the preachers by their attitude toward these human societies; so that if a preacher, however able he may be, arouses the suspicion of one member of any board in the country by questioning their humanisms, he reports to the secretary of that board and that secretary reports to the secretaries of all the boards, and the suspicious character goes on all their 'black lists.' After that, if he gets work anywhere, it will be in spite of combined societyism. Of all this we have a striking illustration right before our eyes now in the way that you have tried to crush the work here by this great convention.

"Now, my friends, I know that I have scored you right and left and pierced you through and through, while you have been completely at my mercy. And why? Not because you are not intelligent, not because you are cowardly or indifferent, but because you have not the truth—or, rather, have so much that is not truth; hence your weakness. Everything seems to indicate that there is a great triumph for truth here to-night, and to this extent I rejoice; but, in spite of my rejoicing, there is a feeling of the deepest sad-

ness when I look all over this great audience and see my dear, good friends by the hundreds so completely enslaved by denominationalism that it seems to be utterly impossible for them to come to the truth, where alone in all this world they can enjoy perfect freedom and liberty, and also to see my society friends so completely enslaved by societyism that it seems utterly impossible for them to come to the truth, where they can enjoy that perfect freedom that the word of God alone affords.

“The only reason that I have said what I have to-night is not because I despise any of you, but because I love you; and if I have appeared a little sarcastic at times, it was only to challenge your attention to the ruinous additions that you have made to the word of God, and thereby supplanted the work of the elders, and even the churches themselves, by human societies. O, instead of hating any of you, if it would do any good, I could weep, mourn, and cry aloud over our divided condition! We all know that the miserable tree of division has never produced anything but bitter fruit—strife, dissension, and contention; while our being one, as God and Christ are one, as the Savior prayed, and being of the same mind, the same judgment, and speaking the same thing, as the apostles taught, will always produce strength, happiness, joy, peace, comfort, consolation, and hope.

“Believing with all my heart, from the rapt attention to this rather lengthy address, that hundreds present to-night see this important truth as never before and are now ready to bow implicitly to the word of God as their exclusive rule of faith and practice, we are going to sing a song of Heaven’s invitation for you to come to God, come to Christ, come to the Bible—to salvation. Let nothing come between you and salvation or between you and perfect liberty. O, the weights

and balances of eternity are suspended upon your choice to-night! God says come, Christ says come, the church says come, and the angels of heaven are now leaning, as it were, over the shining battlements of heaven to hear your decision. What will it be? Though the oceans may cover you and the mountains press you down, though the earth may tremble and the heavens fall, make the right choice to-night, while we all stand and sing."

As nearly that entire concourse of people sung that good old song, "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?" with greater zeal than ever before in the history of their lives, people began to come by the score, from the right and from the left, from the front and from the rear, from within the tabernacle and from without—ministers and people from denominationalism, from societyism, and from the world—till, beyond the possibility of a doubt, it was the most enthusiastic meeting and the greatest ingathering since the first Pentecost after the Savior's resurrection from the dead.

When the song was finished, all sat down except Honor-bright, minister of —— Church, who remained standing and said: "I noticed several denominational ministers and very many members of the various churches, my own as well as others, go forward; and I was more than rejoiced to see it. The reason I did not go forward was not because I thought that Brother Worthy was wrong in a single point, but because I wanted this opportunity to invite him to come to our church next Lord's day and help us to unload our traditions, humanisms, and creeds, and get back to the Bible—organize us into a church of Christ. If we cannot gainsay anything that he has said to-night; if his own brethren who have made additions to the Lord's worship cannot; if no one in this great convention can, why, he must be right. I think the

wise and honest thing for us all to do is to just give it all up—throw everything human to the winds—and go back to the Bible, whence we started and where the Lord intended for us to remain; and if you cannot get back by yourselves, do just like we are going to do—that is, get Brother Worthy to come and help you.”

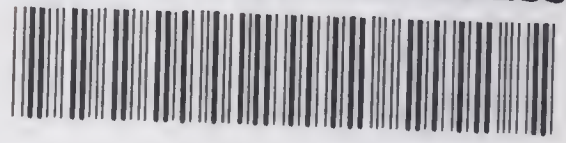
This seemed to be the consensus of opinion of all present, except a few who were too prejudiced or too stubborn to yield error for truth.

After hundreds were heard to make the noble confession that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God,” and after the baptisms had been set for the following evening, Philip Worthy closed the meeting with the following prayer and benediction: “Ever-to-be-adored and ever-to-be-praised Lord God Almighty, in view of the shortness of time and the length of eternity, the uncertainty of life, the certainty of death and the judgment, we stand in thy divine presence, with great humility of heart and deep solemnity of purpose; for we all realize that we are so weak and so helpless that without thy divine aid we can do nothing, surrounded, as we are, by sins and temptations, by which we are frequently overcome and made to turn to the right and to the left, to sin by omission and commission, by word, thought, and deed; that we are entirely dependent upon thee for all that we have and are or expect to be, in this world and in the world to come. But we bless and praise and magnify thy great and holy name for what our eyes have seen, our ears have heard, and our hearts have been made to enjoy this night. Heaven and earth are now rejoicing together over the humble submission of so many to thy holy law. May all who have made this noble confession to-night put their Lord on in baptism and ‘arise to walk in newness of life.’ Henceforth may

their entire lives be in perfect keeping with the great confession they have made, the positions they occupy in the church, and ever 'walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called;' may they be a blessing to their families, the community, the church, and the world; and may the blessings of Heaven rest upon them at all times. As we go away from this place, may we all feel that it is good for us to have been here; may we feel 'strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might,' more determined than ever before to 'faithfully continue in welldoing, ever seeking for glory, honor, incorruption, and eternal life;' may we draw the armor of God closer about us and walk with a firmer step than ever before. And, finally, when we are worn out in thy service—are done with the trials, tribulations, and disappointments of this life; when our pathways shall have brought us to the edge of our graves, may we have nothing to do but to fall asleep in the arms of Jesus, there to await that bright and glorious resurrection morn, when, at the trump of God, we shall all come forth to meet thee in peace, when we shall have a joyful entrance through the pearly gates into that eternal city—there where we may, hand in hand, arm in arm, with all of our friends in Christ who have gone before us and who are to follow after us, walk the gold-paved streets of that celestial city; there where we may join in as members of that heavenly choir and in the melodies of heaven sing that heavenly song to the glory, honor, and immortality of God, the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Redeemer. Amen."

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